July 11, 1988

THE NEW YORKER

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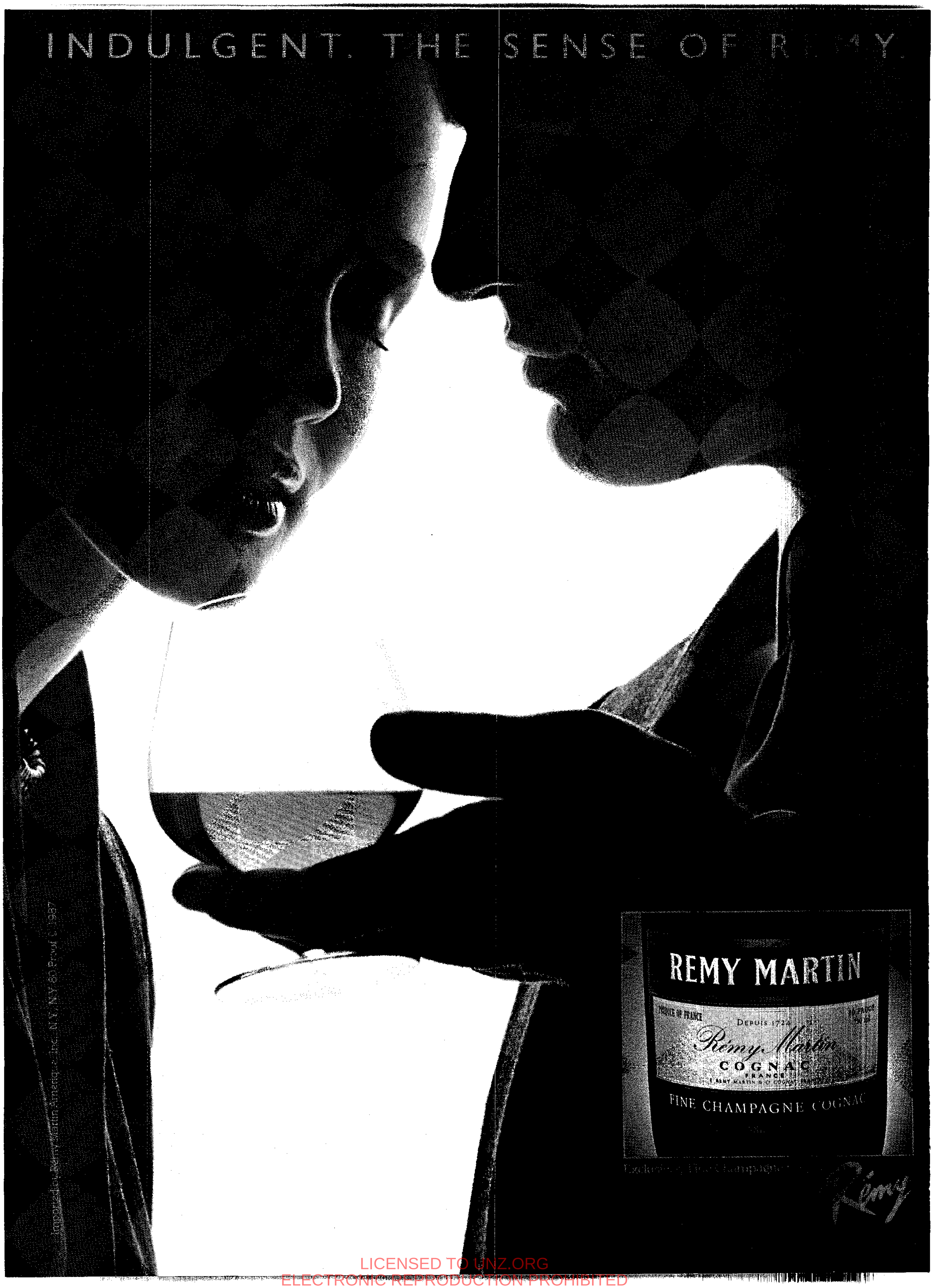
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THE NEW YORKER
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THE NEW YORKER (ISSN 0028-792X), published weekly by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., 25 W. 43rd St., N.Y., N.Y. 10036; Steven T. Florio, president and chief executive officer; Rebecca Wesson Darwin, vice-president and publisher; Sam R. Spoto, vice-president; Stuart H. Jason, vice-president and treasurer; Ruth A. Diem, vice-president and human resources director; Frank Mustacato, vice-president and circulation director; Virginia L. Keegan, vice-president and business manager; Lynn Guthrie Heiler, advertising director. Branch advertising offices: 111 East Wacker Drive, Chicago, Ill. 60601; 41 Osgood Place, San Francisco, Calif. 94133; Suite 2360, 5900 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90036; 67½ Chestnut St., Boston, Mass. 02108; 19 South Audley St., London, W1Y 5DN. Metropolitan Publishers Representatives: 3017 Piedmont Road, NE, Atlanta, Ga. 30305; 2500 So. Dixie Highway, Miami, Fla. 33133; 3016 Mason Place, Tampa, Fla. 33629; 3 Church St., Suite 503, Toronto, Canada. M5E 1M2. Vol. LXIV, No. 21, July 11, 1988. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second-class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, Canada, and for payment of postage in cash. © 1988 by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., in the United States and Canada. All rights reserved. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without the consent of The New Yorker. The magazine's name, logo, and various titles and headings herein have been registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Printed in U.S.A. Subscription rates: In U.S. and possessions, one year, $32.00; two years, $52.00. In Canada, one year, $50.00. Other foreign, one year, $56.00, payable in advance.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The New Yorker, Box 56447, Boulder, Colorado 80322.

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MORGAN STANLEY

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Godspell—A revival of the 1971 musical by Stephen Schwartz and John-Michael Tebelak. (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Into the Woods—The new musical by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine is an attempt to show what lurks beneath the surface of conventional fairy tales. The amusing first half is like a musical staging of Bruno Bettelheim's "The Uses of Enchantment." The rather nasty second half degenerates into cheap philosophy. The costumes (by Ann Hould-Ward) and sets (by Tony Straiges) are pretty to look at, and the songs are beautiful or funny—sometimes both. Directed by Mr. Lapine. (Reviewed in our issue of 11/16/87.) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

M. Butterfly—David Henry Hwang's funny, mysterious, and often beautiful play is based on an actual case: in 1964, a French diplomat took as his mistress a star of the Beijing Opera, and some twenty years later—when they were both charged with being spies—discovered that "she" was a he. John Lithgow, in the leading role, gives an exceptional performance, and so does B. D. Wong as his lover. Lori Tan Chinn, George N. Martin, and Rose Gregorio give them sound support. (4/4/88) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

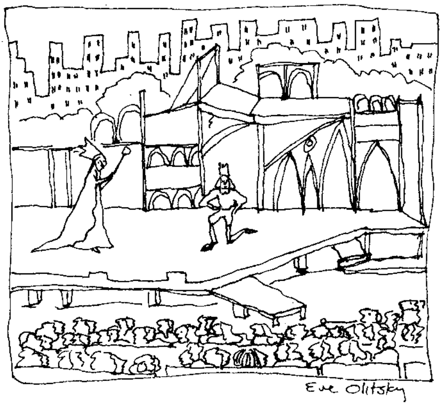
Negro Ensemble Company—**WEST MEMPHIS MOJO,** a production of the audacious Crossroads Theatre of New Brunswick, is set in a barbershop in West Memphis, Arkansas, in 1955 and tells of the attempt of a pair of blues songwriters and a guitarist to make it in rock and roll, which is beginning to take off. Martin Jones wrote the strong, witty script, and Rick Khan directed. (6/27/88) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-8545. Wednesday and Thursday at 8. Matinée Wednesday at 3. Closes Thursday, July 7.)

Oil City Symphony—Mike Craver, Mark Hardwick, Debra Monk, and Mary Murfitt, gifted and sophisticated singers and instrumentalists, appear as a quartet of dedicated hicks reuniting at their small-town high school in this very funny, very musical musical. Mr. Hardwick and Miss Monk, by the way, are alumni of "Pump Boys and Dinettes" of blessed memory. (1/18/88) (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

The Phantom of the Opera—The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets (by Maria Björnson), everything about the show is negligible, including the overhyped performance of Michael Crawford in the title role. (2/8/88) (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

The Road to Mecca—An absorbing, if somewhat elusive, play by the South African dramatist Athol Fugard, about an aging woman sculptor who is mystical and independent, and who resists the attempts of a local minister to persuade her to go into an old-people's home. With Yvonne Bryceland, Mr. Fugard himself, and Kathy Bates, as a young disciple of the sculptor. Mr. Fugard directed. (4/25/88) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Romance/Romance—A pair of charming one-act musicals that have travelled successfully from Off to Broadway. Scott Bakula and Alison Fraser are as romantic as required in the leading roles. Barry Harman wrote the clever books and lyrics, and Keith Herrmann wrote the engaging scores. Mr. Harman directed. (5/16/88) (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)



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Speed-the-Plow—David Mamet's satire on Hollywood is just as scathing, just as acute as his "Glengarry Glen Ross," and even funnier, if that can be imagined. Under the direction of Gregory Mosher, Joe Mantegna and Ron Silver give stunning performances as a pair of sleazy producers, and Madonna does well, too, as a wide-eyed secretary. (5/16/88) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6277. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

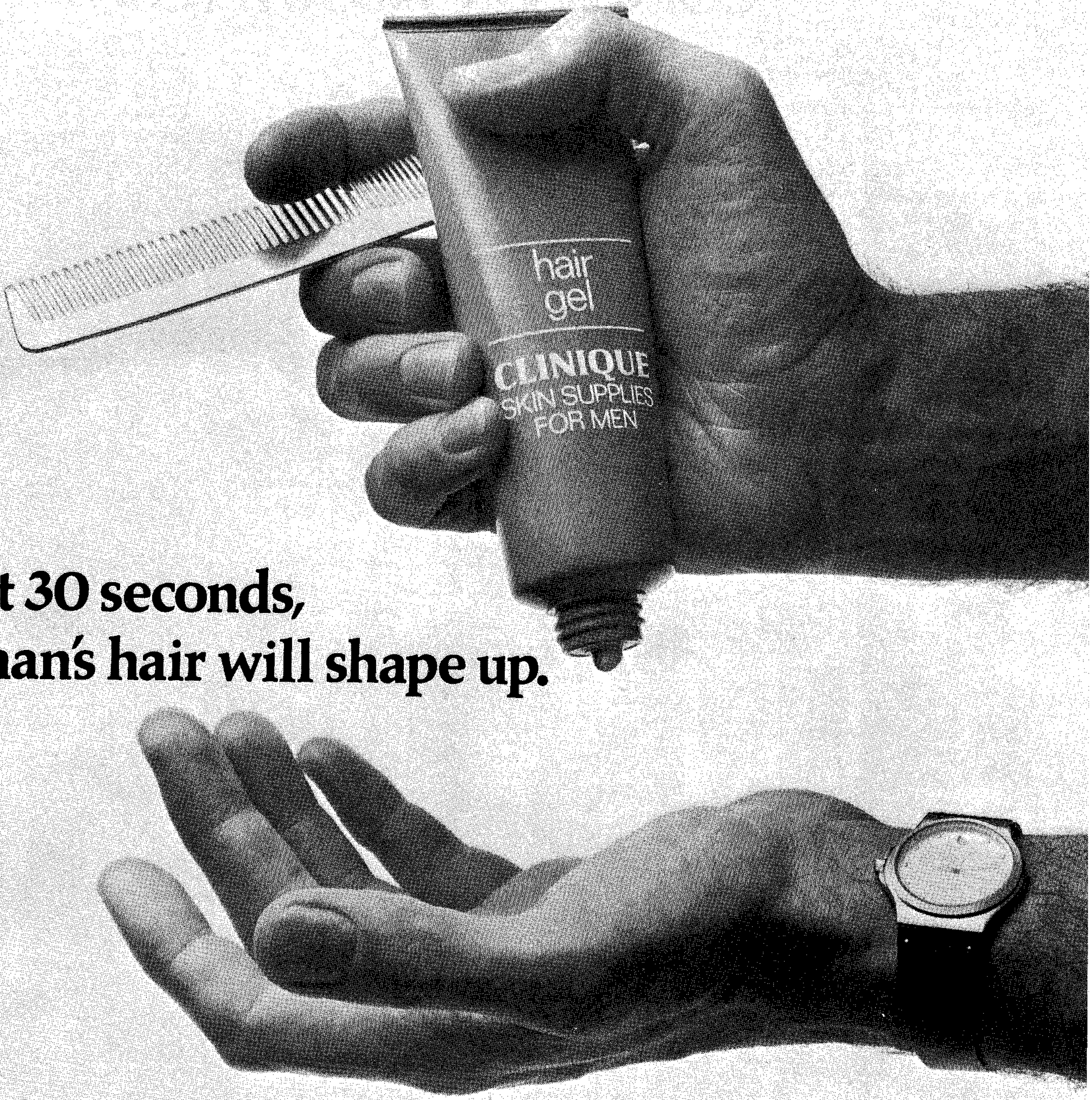
Tamara—A participatory theatrical encounter, in which the audience must literally follow the characters as they move from room to room in what is supposed to be Gabriele D'Annunzio's villa. (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. 239-2590. Mondays through Wednesdays, and Fridays, at 8; Saturdays at 5 and 9; and Sundays at 7. The matinée schedule varies; please call ahead.)

Three Ways Home—S. Epatha Merkerson is a welfare mother; Malcolm-Jamal Warner is her unmanageable sixteen-year-old son; and Mary McDonnell is a volunteer social worker assigned to her case. All of them are splendid. The play, by Casey Kurtti, much of it in monologues, is comic and sad and never dull. (6/6/88) (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Long Runs—**ANYTHING GOES:** This exuberant revival is primarily a celebration of Cole Porter himself. The company, which includes Bill McCutcheon, Howard McGillin, Patti LuPone, Anthony Heald, and Kathleen Mahony-Bennett, does more than justice to the words and score. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **BROADWAY BOUND:** In the third of his trilogy of autobiographical plays, Neil Simon takes us from Brooklyn to Manhattan, from ignominy to the promise of fame. Joan Rivers plays the mother; Gene Saks was the director. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays and Monday, July 4, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Sunday, July 10, at 3.) . . . **BURN THIS:** A play by Lanford Wilson, with Eric Roberts as a foulmouthed restaurant manager who woos and wins his dead brother's dancing partner. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **CATS:** Ezra Pound nicknamed T. S. Eliot "Old Possum," and under that name Eliot wrote a collection of poems about cats, and now the cats are on display on Broadway, with music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, scenery and costumes by John Napier, and direction by Trevor Nunn. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **DRIVING MISS DAISY:** Frances Sternhagen and Earle Hyman star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** This longest of long runs recently had its twenty-eighth birthday. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **42ND STREET:** Once upon a time there was a silly-wonderful Warner Brothers musical about a young hoofer who goes on in place of a disabled star and herself becomes a star overnight. The legitimate musical that has been fashioned from the movie musical is just as silly but by no means as wonderful. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 398-0280. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8:15. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:15, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **FRANKIE AND JOHNNY IN THE CLAIR DE LUNE:** Carol Kane and Bruce Weitz in Terrence McNally's enchanting comedy about sex and the sudden onset of love in an apartment on Tenth Avenue. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 3.) . . . **ME AND MY GIRL:** A fifty-year-old British musical starring Jim Dale. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Tim Shew and Norman Large star in the musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel, but the real standouts of the production are the settings, by John Napier, and the lighting, by David Hersey. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2; special matinée Monday, July 4, at 2:30.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **SARAFINA!:** This South African musical, an explosion of talent, was conceived, written, and directed by Mbongeni Ngema, who also, with Hugh Masekela, composed and arranged the score. The acting, dancing, and singing, to a local form of popular music called Mbaqanga, are a wonder. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **A SHAYNA MAIDEL:** A well-wrought and deeply moving play by Barbara Lebow about a Polish-Jewish family torn apart by the events of the Hitler era. The production is beautifully directed by Mary B. Robinson. Bring lots of Kleenex to this one, but expect to leave uplifted. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **STARLIGHT EXPRESS:** A bore on roller skates. (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **STEEL MAGNOLIAS:** This first play by Robert Harling is set in a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana, and consists mainly of the often amusing, wisecracking chatter of the proprietress, her assistant, and four steady customers. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 6 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

Le Cirque du Soleil—Final performances by a circus from Montreal. (Battery Park City. Tuesday through Thursday, July 5-7, at 8;



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Friday, July 8, at 5:30 and 9; Saturday, July 9, at 4:30 and 8; and Sunday, July 10, at 1 and 4:30. For information about tickets, call 344-5910.)

Without You I'm Nothing—Sandra Bernhard in a one-woman show. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477. Wednesdays and Thursdays at 8; Fridays and Saturdays at 8 and 10:30; and Sundays at 5:30 and 9.)

Jackie Mason's "The World According to Me!"—The comedian's one-man show. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 719-4099. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

Canciones de Mi Padre—Linda Ronstadt and a company of twenty-one in a revue of mariachi songs and dances. Performances will begin on Tuesday, July 12, and will run through Saturday, July 30. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2.)

THE FESTIVAL

(Only a week left to go of the First New York International Festival of the Arts, which concludes on Monday, July 11. For recorded information about performances, call 587-1111 or, outside New York, 1-800 782-4396; for reservations, call the individual box offices.)

THEATRE

American Repertory Theatre—Two plays in repertory. **SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR:** Robert Brustein's adaptation of the Pirandello classic. (Wednesday and Thursday, July 6-7, at 8; Friday, July 8, at 5 and 9; Saturday, July 9, at 7; and Monday and Tuesday, July 11-12, at 8.) . . . **BIG TIME: SCENES FROM A SERVICE ECONOMY:** Keith Reddin's one-act satire about terrorism and international finance. Directed by Steven Schachter. (Wednesday, July 13, at 8.) (Joyce, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

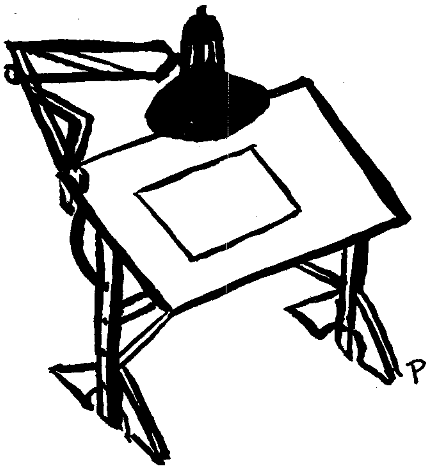
The Death of García Lorca—José Antonio Riál's play about the last three days in the life of the Spanish writer. Directed by Carlos Giménez and translated, from the Spanish, by Julio Marzán. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Monday, at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, July 10.)

I'll Go On—A one-man performance of excerpts from three novels by Samuel Beckett. Barry McGovern is the one man, and he serves the author well. He also did the adapting, with Gerry Dukes. A production of the Gate Theatre Dublin. (Reviewed in our issue of 7/4/88.) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, July 17.)

Miracolo d'Amore—This theatre piece, conceived and directed by the extraordinary Martha Clarke, was inspired by, among other things, the Punchinello drawings of Tiepolo, the eighteenth-century Venetian artist. The score was composed by Richard Peaslee; the setting and costumes were designed by Robert Israel; and the lighting was by Paul Gallo. The show is a treat for the eye and ear and, occasionally, the funnybone for the mere sixty minutes it runs. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

The Night of the Iguana—Except for the performances of Jane Alexander and Maria Tucci, this revival of Tennessee Williams' play is negligible. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

O'Neill Centennial Celebration—A disappointing revival of **LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT** alternates with a sunny revival of **AH, WILDERNESS!** Jason Robards and Colleen Dewhurst star in both. (Reviewed in our issue of 7/4/88.) . . . ¶ "Ah, Wilderness!": Monday, July 4, at 8; Wednesday, July 6, at 2 and 8; and Thursday, July 7, at 8. . . . "Long Day's Journey": Tuesday, July 5, and Friday, July 8, at 8; Saturday, July 9, at 2 and 8; Monday and Tuesday, July 11-12, at 8; and Wednesday, July 13, at 2 and 8. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.)



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Also Playing—**ENSEMBLE STUDIO THEATRE:** A one-act-play marathon, the second cycle of which closes Monday, July 4. The third (and last) cycle starts Wednesday, July 6, and consists of "The Man Who Climbed the Pecan Trees," by Horton Foote; "Diphthong," by Michael B. Kaplan; "Slaughter in the Lake," by José Rivera; and "Singing Joy," by Oyamo. (549 W. 52nd St. 247-3405. Mondays and Wednesdays through Fridays at 7:30; Saturdays at 9; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 5 and Sundays at 3.) . . . **HENRY STREET SETTLEMENT:** "Jika," a play about the South African student movement, written and directed by Maishe Maponya. (466 Grand St. 598-0400. Thursdays through Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.) . . . **INTAR:** A pair of one-act musicals (both with a score by Fernando Rivas) set in New York—one in the thirties, the other in 1999. (420 W. 42nd St. 465-1761. Wednesday through Sunday at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, July 10.) . . . **MABOU MINES:** In "Flow My Tears, the Policeman Said," a work taken from a science-fiction novel by Philip K. Dick. (Tisch School of the Arts Theatre, New York University, 721 Broadway. Nightly, except Monday, at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 2. For information about tickets, call 869-3530. Closes Sunday, July 10.) . . . **PAN ASIAN REPERTORY THEATRE:** Momoko Iko's "Boutique Living & Disposable Icons." (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 245-2660. Tuesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Saturday at 2 and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, July 10.) . . . **THEATRE FOR THE NEW CITY:** Bob Morris's play "A Circle," about two American artists hiding from New York in a small town in Italy. (155 First Ave., at 10th St. 254-1109. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Saturday at 2 and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, July 10.) . . . **YUME NO YUMINSHA:** An experimental theatre group from Japan in "Comet Messenger—Siegfried." In Japanese, with English narration. (Majestic, 651 Fulton St., about a block east of Flatbush Ave., Brooklyn. 1-718 636-4100. Thursday and Friday, July 7-8, at 8; Saturday, July 9, at 2 and 8; and Sunday, July 10, at 2.)

DANCE

Pina Bausch Tanztheater Wuppertal—In "Carnations," a full-length work. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Tuesday, July 5, and Thursday through Saturday, July 7-9, at 8; and Sunday, July 10, at 2.)

MUSIC

Placido Domingo—Singing arias, love songs, and folk songs to mark the end of the festival. With Rosario Andrade, soprano; Gloria Estefan; and Linda Ronstadt. Eugene Kohn will conduct the American Symphony Orchestra. (Central Park's Great Lawn. Monday, July 11, at 8. The rain date is Tuesday, July 12. No tickets necessary.)

Orchestras and Recitalists—**SOUND SPACE ARK:** A chamber group from Japan, performing works by its director, Toru Takemitsu, and others, including John Cage. With Fred Sherry, cello, and Ida and Ani Kavafian, violin. (Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. 752-3015. Tuesday through Friday, July 5-8, at 8.) . . . **THREE AVANT-GARDE VOCALISTS:** Joan La Barbara, Shelley Hirsch, and Frank Royon Le Mée performing their own compositions. Miss La Barbara uses a set designed by Judy Chicago. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Wednesday, July 6, at 8.) . . . **LONDON SINFONIETTA:** Esa-Pekka Salonen conducting the chamber ensemble in two performances, the first with soloists Paul Crossley, piano, and György Pauk, violin; no soloists on the second night. (Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911. Wednesday and Thursday, July 6-7, at 8.) . . . **CHILINGIRIAN STRING QUARTET:** Playing quartets by Elgar, Britten, and Tippett. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Thursday, July 7, at 8.) . . . **SIBELIUS ACADEMY QUARTET:** Musicians from Finland playing works by Ravel, Vladimir Agopov, and Sibelius himself. (Merkin Concert Hall. Thursday, July 7, at 8.) . . . **ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY:** Leonard Slatkin conducting two programs, the first with Emanuel Ax, piano, and the second with Elmar Oliveira, violin. (Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424. Friday and Saturday, July 8-9, at 8.) . . . **BARTÓK QUARTET:** A Hungarian ensemble playing Quartet Nos. 3, 6, and 4. (92nd Street Y. Saturday, July 9, at 8.) . . . **CARTER BREY:** A cellist, in a program of works by David Diamond, Leon Kirchner, and Astor Piazzolla. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Sunday, July 10, at 7:30.)

Pop—Les Amazones de Guinée, an ensemble of policewomen who sing, dance, and play popular African music; and Doudou Ndiaye Rose, leading thirty-two drummers and dancers in traditional African music. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Thursday, July 7, at 8.) . . . ¶ Dianne McIntyre's Sounds in Motion. (Friday, July 8, at 8:30.) . . . Pianosaurus and Jonathan Richman. (Saturday, July 9, at 3.) . . . Beausoleil. (Sunday, July 10, at 3.) (Central Park Band Shell, mid-Park at 72nd St. No tickets necessary.)

PERFORMANCE ART

P.S. 122—**TERRY GALLOWAY:** A storyteller from Austin in "Been Out All Night." (Wednesday and Thursday, July 6-7, at 9.) . . . **DUMB TYPE:** A dance-oriented performance group from Kyoto that makes use of film and photography. (Thursday through Sunday, July 7-10, at 8.) . . . **DANNY MYDLACK:** Video, accordions, slides, and stories. (Friday through Sunday, July 8-10, at 9.) (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

FILM AND VIDEO

"Great Masters of the Performing Arts"—The Museum of Broadcasting celebrates personalities of the musical theatre with television shows from its archives. Danny Kaye programs: Tuesday, July 5, at 12:15, 2, 3:45, and 5:30. . . . ¶ A Mary Martin–Noël Coward program: Wednesday, July 6, at 12:15 and 3:15. . . . ¶ Ethel Merman programs: Thursday, July 7, at 12:15, 1:45, and 3:15. . . . ¶ A Marlene Dietrich program: Friday, July 8, at 12:15, 1:45, and 3:30. . . . ¶ A Beatrice Lillie program: Saturday, July 9, at 12:15, 1:45, and 3:30. (1 E. 53rd St. For detailed program and ticket information, call 752-7684.)

"International Treasures of Film"—The Museum of Modern Art hosts a series of films, from the teens to the eighties, in which one or another of the performing arts has prominence. Monday, July 4, at 2:30 and 6: "The Magic Flute" (1975; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Tuesday, July 5, at 2:30 and 6: "The Mikado" (1939; Victor Schertzinger), with Kenny Baker, John Barclay, and Martyn Green. . . . ¶ Thursday, July 7, at 3, 5:30, and 8: "Macbeth" (1948; Orson Welles), with Mr. Welles, Jeanette Nolan, and Dan O'Herlihy. . . . ¶ Friday, July 8, at 3, 5:30, and 8: "A Night at the Opera" (1935; Sam Wood), with the Marx Brothers, Margaret Dumont, and Siegfried Rumann. . . . ¶ Saturday, July 9, at 3, 5:30, and 8: "Death of a Salesman" (1951; Laslo Benedek), with Fredric March, Mildred Dunnock, and Kevin McCarthy. . . . ¶ Sunday, July 10, at 3, 5:30, and 8: "The Golden Coach" (1953; Jean Renoir), with Anna Magnani, Duncan Lamont, and Riccardo Rioli. (Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. 708-9490.)

DANCE

PARIS OPÉRA BALLET—Final performances of the engagement—Tuesday, July 5, at 8, and Wednesday, July 6, at 2 and 8: "The Nutcracker." . . . ¶ Thursday and Friday, July 7-8, at 8, and Saturday, July 9, at 2 and 8: "Le Martyre de Saint Sébastien" (American première). (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

ROYAL SPANISH NATIONAL BALLET—Opening performances of a one-week engagement that will run through Saturday, July 16. (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. Monday, July 11, at 7:30, and Tuesday and Wednesday, July 12-13, at 8.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**LILIANE MONTEVECCHI,** a former Folies-Bergère star who came to notice here in the Broadway show "Nine," sings in the solemn, woody space known as the Oak Room at nine-fifteen Tuesday through Saturday, July 5-9. After she goes, silence will prevail until the end of the summer. Dining.

ANGRY SQUIRE, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—A nautically appointed bar and restaurant. Any swaying you may notice yourself doing is probably generated by the musicians, who perform amidships on a railed-in platform. Pianist **KIRK NUROCK** and three mates will be on hand Friday and Saturday, July 8-9. First set at ten.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A sleek cabaret on the edge of Chelsea, near the flower and fur markets. **LARRY ADLER,** the king of the mouth organists ("If I heard a better one," he says in his autobiography, "I would become that player's press agent"), shares the stage Tuesday through Saturday, July 5-9, with **HAROLD NICHOLAS,** the singer and dancer who used to walk up walls and leap over big bands with his brother Fayard. Shows at nine. Starting Tuesday, July 12, **PATTI PAGE** will be here to unburden herself of some of her megahits.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A bemirrored jazz club with a piece of neon art on the back wall (the Manhattan skyline and attendant celestial bodies) and with bright clusters of musicians on the dais. The slant here for the next couple of weeks is Latin. Alto saxophonist **PAQUITO D'RIVERA'S** quintet trades off with Brazilian singer **LENY ANDRADE** and her followers Tuesday through Sunday, July 5-10. Music from nine. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Bruce Springsteen played here in 1975 and, eyewitnesses say, just about blew the house down; Tony Bennett sang here in 1981; and Dan Hicks, the toast of the folk-swing circuit, spent a night here in 1987. ("Howdja hear about this?" Hicks asked the audience, a small one.) In between and since, big stars and little stars, people with interesting haircuts and people with no hair have come and gone. **LAURA NYRO,** whose keyed-up New York wail your keyed-up teen-age sister closed her door to listen to twenty years ago, will be here Friday and Saturday, July 8-9, but unless you already have a ticket you won't see her; her shows are sold out. **UNCLE BONSAI,** a Seattle-based vocal group (one countertenor, two sopranos) whose members sing in perfect harmony whether they are bashing cheerleaders ("Cheerleaders on Drugs") or needling boys ("Boys Want Sex in the Morning"), performs Wednesday, July 13, along with **TIMBUK 3,** a kind of low-budget trio (the third member is a rhythm machine) whose live parts (a husband-and-wife team) are responsible for several well-made satirical songs, including "(The Future's So Bright) I Gotta Wear Shades" and "Facts About Cats." Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A Village bar that has long featured first-rate piano-bass teams and tireless conversationalists and that now also features Bradley's T-shirts, Bradley's sweatshirts, Bradley's customized coasters, horn players, a person to take an admission fee, and a person to seat you and shush you. Tenor saxophonist **GEORGE COLEMAN** works with pianist **MICHAEL WEISS** and bassist **BOB CRANSHAW** through Saturday, July 9, and with **HAROLD MABERN** and **JAMIL NASSER** starting Monday, July 11. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

CARLOS I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—It's so nice in here—silken woodwork and long tables with pink tablecloths and pink napkins—you might mistake it for a jazz club on a movie set but for the real musicians onstage. **BILLY BANG,** a young New York violinist who can swing and rhapsodize as well as dig into your ear the way a mosquito does, leads a quartet Tuesday through Sunday, July 5-10; **AL GREY,** who gets laughing sounds and big wa-was and complete sentences out of his old trombone, brings in a quintet on Tuesday, July 12. Music from nine-thirty. Dining.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—**SANTI DEBRIANO'S** Double-Bass Quintet plays in this cozy belowstairs room Tuesday and Wednesday, July 5-6; a quartet run by pianist **HORACE PARLAN** and saxophonist **ARCHIE SHEPP** performs Thursday through Saturday, July 7-9. Mondays remain in the hands of guitarist **LES PAUL.** Music from eight. Dining.

FORTUNE GARDEN PAVILION, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—Two nice things not known to be available in the next world—Chinese cooking and American jazz—are here, under a greenhouse roof giving on to some prime midtown airspace. **JOHN BUNCH'S** sure hands will be on the piano Tuesday and Wednesday, July 5-6; **ROGER KELLAWAY,** a pianist for whom two hands are not always enough (he sometimes uses an elbow to splatter the keyboard and to punctuate one of his flying tours around it), is on duty Thursday through Sunday, July 7-10; **JUDY CARMICHAEL,** a young stride devotee, is in charge starting Tuesday, July 12. Music from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays, and from six on Sundays.

GREENE STREET, 101 Greene St. (925-2415)—A cathedral-size bar and restaurant. Pianists practice their art in a little grove of palms a half mile or so from the bar. Bring your binoculars. The schedule: Tuesday and Wednesday, July 5-6, **MICKEY TUCKER;** Thursday through Saturday, July 7-9, **RAHN BURTON;** and Tuesday and Wednesday, July 12-13, **ARMEN DONELIAN.** Sets begin at seven Tuesdays through Thursdays, and at seven-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Closed Mondays.

J'S, 2581 Broadway, at 97th St. (666-3600)—A room with a view (of Broadway) and with jazz (mostly of the mainstream type). The lineup: Tuesdays, July 5 and 12, singer-pianist **RICHARD RODNEY BENNETT;** Wednesday, July 6, the Judy Niemack trio; Thursday, July 7, singer-guitarist **JOHN PIZZARELLI'S** trio; Friday, July 8, singer **CARLA WHITE'S** band; and Saturday, July 9, clarinettist **KEN PEPLOWSKI'S** trio. Music from eight Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A pleasant low-key bar and restaurant in the piano-bass district. **RUSS KASOFF,** who is taking a break from his chores as Liza Minnelli's accompanist, works with bassist **MICHAEL MOORE** Tuesday through Saturday, July 5-9; **ROLAND HANNA** and **STAFFORD JAMES** swing into action on Tuesday, July 12. Music from about nine-thirty.

KNITTING FACTORY, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—A second-floor music and performing space, where people come to ponder the meaning of harmolodics and the post-ness of postmodernism. The room is run by two amiable young guys from Wisconsin, whose views on such things as cover charges are enlightened. Their two-and-a-half-week new-jazz festival winds up on Wednesday, July 6, with a double bill featuring two drummers—**SUNNY MURRAY** (a longtime Cecil Taylor associate) and **RONALD SHANNON JACKSON** (a former Ornette Coleman collaborator)—and their groups. **ANDREW CYRILLE,** another Cecil Taylor drummer, leads a trio on Tuesday, July 5. **JONATHAN RICHMAN,** the owner of one of rock and roll's wobbliest voices and flightiest imaginations, has the floor Tuesday and Wednesday, July 12-13. Music after eight.

LONE STAR CAFÉ, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—Scary-movie buffs like the epic-size iguana on the roof, Texans like the reminders of home, and musicians like the Texans, the New Yorkers, and the other visitors from this planet who regularly fill the joint up. **DR. JOHN,** the Louisiana piano thumper and blues growler, holds forth Friday and Saturday, July 8-9, along with accordionist **C. J. CHENIER** (son of the late Clifton Chenier). Rockabilly elder **CARL PERKINS** performs Monday and Tuesday, July 11-12. Music after nine. Dining.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A mid-Manhattan pub for well-heeled gents and their high-heeled foxes. Two groups that specialize in jazz before bebop are sharing the bandstand. One is **VINCE GIORDANO & THE NIGHTHAWKS,** a ten-piece band that re-creates the music of the twenties and thirties. The other is a group that models itself after the Quintette du Hot Club de France—the all-string ensemble founded by Django Reinhardt and Stéphane Grappelli in 1934. Shows at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays.

RED BLAZER TOO, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—Traditional jazz (big- and little-band Swing, several varieties of Dixieland) in the theatre district, and not a bad place to calm down in if, for instance, you happen to have just dropped a week's wages by taking the missus and your aunt from Macon to see a Broadway musical. Music from six on Sundays, from eight-thirty Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays.

RITZ, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Rock and roll of the Present Moment—and, occasionally, of the Classical Era (the fifties), the Romantic Era (the sixties), and the OPEC Era (the seventies)—in a big, fancy thirties-era ballroom. **LEONARD COHEN,** the basso-profundo rock poet, intones his bleak chansons on Tuesday, July 5. A new edition of **LITTLE FEAT,** the California boogie-rock band that flourished in the seventies, performs Wednesday and Thursday, July 6-7. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at eleven.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A musical melting pot: samba bands, African pop bands, reggae people, zydeco outfits, and salsa ensembles all pass through this former luncheonette. Tuesday, July 5, Andrew Tosh (son of the late reggae singer Peter Tosh); Wednesday and Thursday, July 6-7, South African funk trumpeter **HUGH MASEKELA;** Friday and Saturday, July 8-9, **MIKATA;** and Monday and Tuesday, July 11-12, **TOURÉ KUNDA,** a Senegalese pop band. Music from nine Mondays through Thursdays, and from ten Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A knotty-pine-and-brick-walled *boîte*, crowded with jazz fans from Japan,

NIGHT LIFE–Cont'd

France, Germany, Denmark, Greenwich Village, and other countries. **MAL WALDRON,** a New York-born pianist with a spare, Monk-ish style who has lived for the last twenty years in Munich, directs a quintet Tuesday through Sunday, July 5-10; **TOMMY FLANAGAN,** a pianist who is cool and light where Waldron is dark and brooding, brings in his trio on Tuesday, July 12. First show at ten. Dining.

TRAMPS, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—A simple, no-frills blues and rock club attached to an Irish pub. Helen Hooke, a fiddler and singer who was a member of the feminist folk-rock trio the Deadly Nightshade in the seventies, leads a quartet at eight on Thursday, July 7. A blues band run by a Chicago pianist named Detroit Jr. has the floor Friday and Saturday, July 8-9, from nine-thirty.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—A bi-level operation. In the downstairs room, which is as big and unbeautiful as a mess hall, salsa bands hold forth on Mondays after nine-thirty. Black Stalin, a soul-calypso singer who didn't choose wisely when he chose his handle, performs Friday and Saturday, July 8-9, at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. . . . ¶ One flight up, in the Terrace Bar, **HERMAN FOSTER,** a pianist who gives you a lot of Erroll Garner-ish dramatics, works with bassist **JON BURR** Tuesday through Sunday, July 5-10; **NEVILLE DICKIE,** an Englishman who favors pre-modern—or, as some people put it, prelapsarian—piano styles (ragtime, stride, boogie-woogie), teams up with pianist **TERRY WALDO,** a Yank who leans in the same direction, starting Tuesday, July 12. On Tuesdays, the visiting duo trades sets with jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN'S** trio. Music from ten.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Perhaps the most famous basement in the world, now in its second half century, this establishment has been described by Max Gordon, the wise, elfin, cigar-smoking proprietor, as "a good joint that people like to come to—thank God." **J. J. JOHNSON,** whose mobile, uninflected trombone work (no smears, slurs, or blats) in the forties set a standard for post-Swing players of his instrument, leads a quintet Tuesday through Sunday, July 5-10; **CHRISTOPHER HOLLYDAY,** teenage alto sax sensation from the Hub, will be here starting Tuesday, July 12, with a quartet that includes old pros **RON CARTER** and **WALTER DAVIS, JR.** Mondays are reserved for the **BOB MINTZER** big band. Music after ten.

WEST END, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—Those who can resist the temptations of the large barroom here—pinball, video games, a dialogue with a budding logical positivist from Columbia U.—will find another, smaller room, where jazz musicians hold sway. **WARREN CHIASSON,** a vibist who passed through George Shearing's quintet in the early sixties and again in the early seventies, leads a quartet that includes another Shearing alum, guitarist **CHUCK WAYNE,** Wednesday through Sunday, July 6-10. Music from about nine. Dining.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A bright, spacious, lightly forested bar and restaurant with an in-between room from which music issues, putting an end to some discussions and inspiring others. Not a creature will stir until Monday, July 11, when pianist **JANE JARVIS** and bassist **MILT HINTON** come in. Music from eight. Closed Sundays.

JAZZ / ROCK / PERSONAL APPEARANCES / PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

LEONARD COHEN—Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Wednesday, July 6, at 8.

BILLY OCEAN—With Brenda Russell. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 757-3100. Friday and Saturday, July 8-9, at 8.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. They will all be closed Monday, July 4.)

GALLERIES

GEORGE AULT (1891-1948)—Works on paper. Through July 29. (Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St.)

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10	11	12	13			

JOSÉ CAMPECHE (1751-1809)—A Puerto Rican who recorded the high society of San Juan in his portraits. Forty-seven of his paintings are currently on view at the Metropolitan Museum. Through Sept. 25. (Museo del Barrio, 1230 Fifth Ave., at 104th St. Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

LAURA FOREMAN / BONNIE LUCAS—Assemblages. / Paintings on paper and assemblages. Through July 23. (Yi, 249 Centre St. Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.)

ADA GILMORE (1883-1955)—Color woodcuts and watercolors. Through July 30. (Ryan, 452 Columbus Ave., at 81st St. Opens at noon Tuesdays through Saturdays.)

JULIO GONZÁLEZ (1876-1942)—Paintings and drawings. Through Aug. 19. (Kent, 41 E. 57th St.)

SYLVIA GUIREY—Five abstract paintings based on Fragonard's "La Bascule." Through July 22. (McCoy, 19 E. 71st St.)

DAVID HOCKNEY—A number of gallery shows are being held to coincide with his retrospective at the Metropolitan Museum. Drawings at Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. Through July 29. . . . ¶ Prints at Drake, 50 W. 57th St. Through July 23. (Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.) . . . ¶ Early graphics at Ingber, 415 West Broadway. Through July 30. (Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.) . . . ¶ Photographs at Kasmin, 580 Broadway. Through July 16. (Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.)

OLIVER JOHNSON—New paintings and drawings. Through Aug. 26. (Felicie, 141 E. 56th St.)

JUSTEN LADDA—An installation linking art and commerce, by an artist whose assemblages of toasters, hair curlers, and golf clubs recall such well-known sculptures as Brancusi's "Kiss" and Giacometti's "Pointing Man," and whose paintings make use of fake fur and plaid fabrics. Through July 15. (Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St.)

STEPHANIE BRODY LEDERMAN—Paintings. Through July 15. (Katzen Brown, 475 Broome St.)

CHARLES MOORE—Drawings the architect made for such projects as the Beverly Hills Civic Center and a condominium complex in Sea Ranch, California. Through Aug. 12. (Protetch, 560 Broadway. Closed Mondays.)

PATRICIA NIX—Painted constructions in mixed mediums. Through July 14. (Nerlino-McGear, 96 Greene St.)

PICASSO (1881-1973)—Paintings, sculptures, and prints from 1950 to 1973. Through July 29. (Krugier, 41 E. 57th St.)

MILTON RESNICK—Densely painted abstractions done in the late fifties. Through July 29. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **ACA,** 41 E. 57th St.: Landscapes by Sylvia Mangold, Jane Freilicher, and Michael Zwack, among others. Through Friday, July 8. . . . **BAGHOOMIAN,** 611 Broadway: Paintings and other works by George Condo, John Armleder, Vahé Fattal, and others. Through July 15. . . . **BLUM HELMAN,** 20 W. 57th St.: Paintings by Michael Young, Jack Barth, and Joan Nelson. Through July 29. . . . **BRANDT,** 568 Broadway: Betty Beaumont, Francesc Torres, and others in a show of works in various mediums. Through July 22. . . . **DINTENFASS,** 50 W. 57th St.: Seven guest artists, including Lynda Bailey, Elizabeth Jordan, and Eric Sparre, showing sculptures and works on paper. Through July 18. . . . **THE DRAWING CENTER,** 35 Wooster St.: A selection of sixty-nine drawings that the curator has categorized as art that copies art. Michelangelo, Dürer, Watteau, Cézanne, and Picasso are among the copiers. Through July 23. (Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.) . . . **GOOD,** 39 Great Jones St.: Works in various mediums by Donald Judd, Nancy Haynes, and Carole Seborovsky. Through Friday, July 8. . . . **HERSTAND,** 24 W. 57th St.: Sculptures and drawings by Auguste Rodin, Isamu Noguchi, and Jenny Lee, among others. Through Sept. 16. . . . **HOFFMAN,** 429 West Broadway: Paintings by Elizabeth Magill, Shahnaz Said, Yuko Shiraishi, and Suzanne Treister. Through July 29. . . . **JACOBSON,** 50 W. 57th St.: Works that create an illusion of depth, including a painting by Gregory Amenoff, a drawing by Wayne Thiebaud, a construction by Joseph Cornell, and sculptures by David Kezur. Through July 29. . . . **KOURY WINGATE,** 578 Broadway: Dike Blair, General Idea, and Cary Smith are a few of the painters and sculptors in this exhibit of new works. Through July 22. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **LITTLEJOHN SMITH,** 133 Greene St.: Paintings, constructions, sculptures, and photographs in a show highlighting the influence of billboard art. Some of the artists are James Rosenquist, Walker Evans, and Julie Heffernan. Through July 23. (Closed Mondays; open Sundays.) . . . **NATURE MORTE,** 204 E. 10th St.: A show of architectural plans and models for commercial art galleries which were submitted to a gallery-sponsored competition. The architects include Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio, Michael Sorkin, and Lynne Breslin and Shauna Mosseri. Through July 24. (Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.) . . . **POSTMASTERS,** 66 Avenue A, near 4th St.: Paintings and sculptures by Jan Frank, David Diao, and Silvia Kolbowski, among others. Through July 17. (Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.) . . . **PROTETCH,** 560 Broadway: Paintings by Arakawa, Alfred Jensen, and Sol LeWitt, who also has a sculpture on view. Through July 15. . . . **SCHMIDT BINGHAM,** 41 W. 57th St.: Paintings by Martha Mayer Erlebacher, Joyce Treiman, Donald Roller Wilson, and others which the gallery calls "oxymorons in art." Through July 22. . . . **SHAINMAN,** 560 Broadway: Large and small paintings, sculptures, drawings, and photographs by Bruno Ceccobelli, Petah Coyne, and others. Through July 29. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **SHARPE,** 152 Wooster St.: Sculptures by Terry Rosenberg and Steve Wood, and paintings by Stephen Williams. Through Aug. 5. . . . **RUTH SIEGEL,** 24 W. 57th St.: Paintings in various mediums by Pat Sutton, Robert Jessup, Robert Berlind, and others. Also, sculptures by Colin Gray. Through July 29. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **303 GALLERY,** 513 E. 6th St., near Avenue A: Works in mixed mediums by David Cabrera, Larry Johnson, Liz Larner, and Charles Ray. Through Saturday, July 9. (Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.) . . . **TOLL,** 146 Greene St.: Paintings by Louise Fishman, Joan Mitchell, and David Reed. Through July 28. . . . **WEBER,** 142 Greene St.: Photographs by Thomas Joshua Cooper, a conceptual installation by Franz Erhard Walther, and a series of more than two hundred works in plaster by Allan McCollum. Through July 22. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **ZABRISKIE,** 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.: Works by the Nouveaux Réalistes, including Yves Klein, Niki de Saint-Phalle, and Gérard Deschamps. Through Friday, July 8.

¶ Exhibitions of works by gallery artists can also be seen at: **ALEXANDER,** 59 Wooster St. . . . **BURGIN,** 270 Lafayette St. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **DE NAGY,** 41 W. 57th St. . . . **GALERIE ST. ETIENNE,** 24 W. 57th St. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **HEIDENBERG,** 50 W. 57th St. . . . **MARCUS,** 578 Broadway. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **NOSEI,** 100 Prince St.

PHOTOGRAPHY

KAREKIN GOEKJIAN—Photographs taken at night by the light of the moon, a strobe, and a halogen flashlight. The time exposures range from fifteen to forty minutes. Through July 28. (Pfeifer, 568 Broadway. Closed Mondays.)

Peggy Jarrell Kaplan—Photographs of Mark Morris, Robert Wilson, other well-known figures, and the cast of "The Mahabharata." Through July 20. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St.)

Josef Koudelka—Photographs, including prints of European Gypsies and country people and of the 1968 Prague uprising. Through Sunday, July 10. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Garry Winogrand (1928-84)—The Museum of Modern Art has mounted a retrospective of his work; see below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

Group Shows—At the **burden,** 20 E. 23rd St.: Harry Callahan, Henri Cartier-Bresson, and Sylvia Plachy are some of the artists who have photographs in a big exhibit entitled "Swimmers." Through July 30. (Opens at 1 Tuesdays through Saturdays.) . . . **gladstone,** 99 Greene St.: Portraiture by Robert Mapplethorpe, Richard Prince, Thomas Ruff, and Jeff Wall. Through July 29.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—The earliest work in the David Hockney retrospective is a self-portrait done when the artist was seventeen. Mr. Hockney has also recorded the Acoustiguide tape for the show, on which he explains his ideas and techniques. Through Aug. 14. Complementary exhibits are at André Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.; Douglas Drake, 50 W. 57th St.; Paul Kasmin, 580 Broadway; and Ingber, 415 West Broadway. . . . ¶ Ninety paintings and drawings by Paul Klee, gifts to the museum from Heinz Berggruen. Through July 31. . . . ¶ Religious paintings and portraits by the eighteenth-century Puerto Rican artist José Campeche. Through Sept. 25. Works by the artist are also at Museo del Barrio. (The Metropolitan is open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

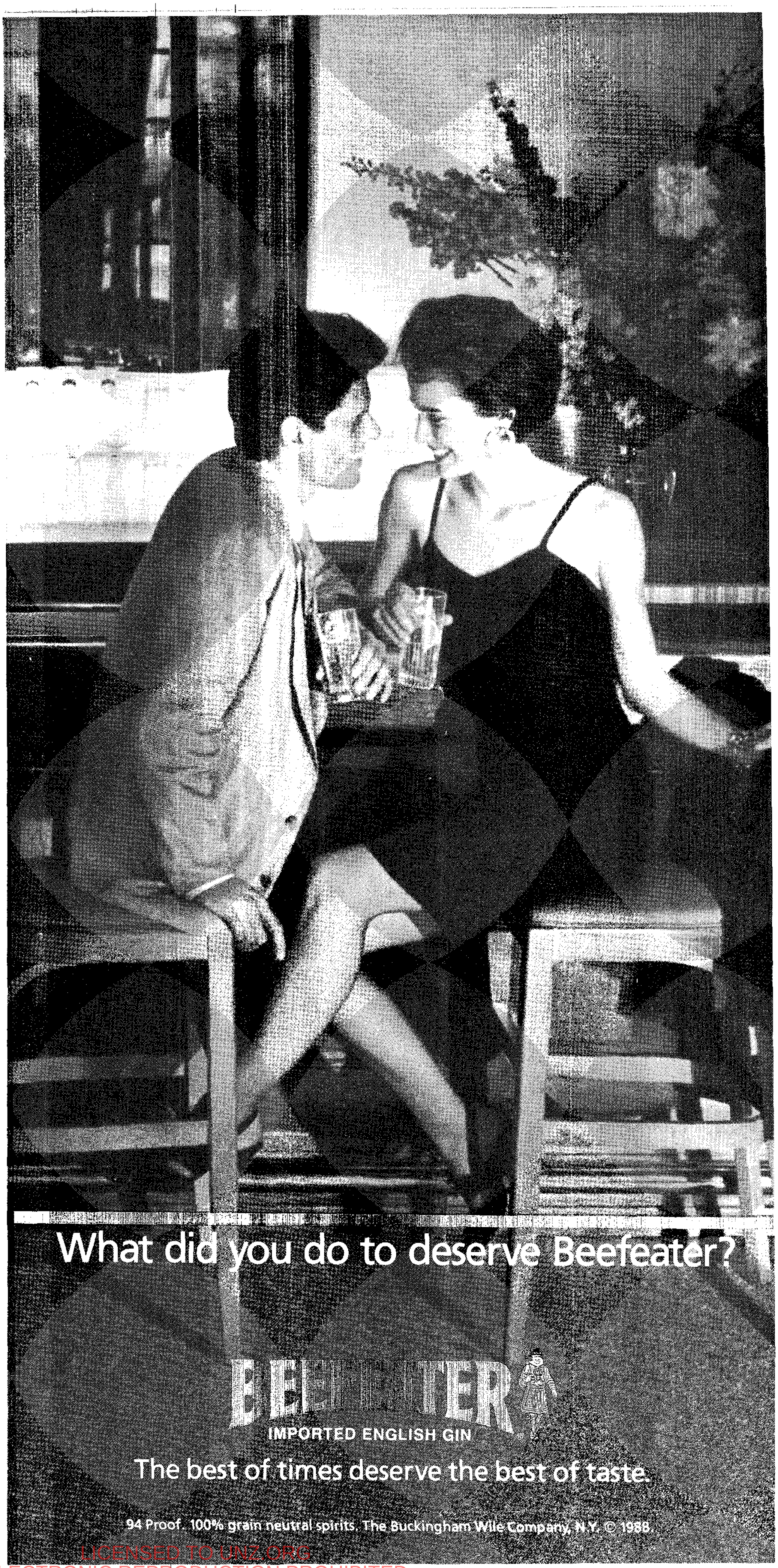
Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Deconstructivist Architecture," drawings, models, and site plans by Coop Himmelblau, Peter Eisenman, Frank Gehry, Zaha M. Hadid, Rem Koolhaas, Daniel Libeskind, and Bernard Tschumi. The chief organizer of the exhibit is Philip Johnson, who describes these architects as having eschewed harmony, unity, and clarity for the sake of disharmony, fracturing, and mystery. Through Aug. 30. . . . **photography:** The Garry Winogrand retrospective. Through Aug. 16. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A retrospective of works by Georges Braque. Through Sept. 11. . . . ¶ A loan show of sixty modern paintings from the National Gallery in Prague, consisting entirely of works that are in America for the first time. The artists include Cézanne, Chagall, Klimt, Gauguin, and Matisse, and their Czech counterparts. Through Sept. 18. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 7:45, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A group of twenty-five abstract oils representing the career of the early American modernist Manierre Dawson. Starts Friday, July 8. . . . ¶ A selection of seventy paintings and sculptures by artists who have transformed botanical forms into abstractions. Arthur Dove, Nancy Graves, and Bill Jensen are among those represented. Through July 17. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"The Uses of Photography in Contemporary Art," a small exhibit from the permanent collection which includes works by Julie Wachtel, Ellen Carey, and David Hockney. . . . ¶ A show documenting the work of Gordon Matta-Clark (1943-78), who used abandoned buildings as sculptural material—cutting out arcs, circles, etc., and displaying leftover fragments in galleries. Through Monday, July 11. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—A hundred and fifty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ART—Cont'd

pre-Columbian artifacts from the permanent collection. Through Aug. 15. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—Two feather suits (complete with feather crowns) that Roger Chapelain-Midy designed for the Paris Opéra's production of "Die Zauberflöte" are among the costumes on display in an exhibit documenting the history of the Paris Opéra House. Also included are costume designs, in watercolors, by Erté, André Derain, and Yves Saint Laurent, original architectural studies by Charles Garnier, and stage jewelry. Through Sept. 25. . . . ¶ The museum's garden is currently dotted with lawn chairs in every conceivable style. These bizarre—but comfortable—pieces are the work of thirty-one San Francisco Bay Area artists, including Martha Schwartz, Veronica di Rosa, and Daniel Friedlander. Through Sept. 18. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—Paintings and drawings Henry Clay Frick collected as a young connoisseur in the early eighteen-eighties have been brought from his Pittsburgh residence, Clayton, and hung alongside some of the Old Masters he acquired later. In the former group are works by Jean-Charles Cazin, Pascal Dagnan-Bouveret, and William M. Harnett. Through Aug. 7. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Grolier Club, 47 E. 60th St.—A retrospective of etchings, woodcuts, and lithographs by the English painter Graham Sutherland (1903-1980). The works range from pastoral landscapes to expressionistic renderings of birds and insects. Through Sept. 30. (Open Mondays, except July 4, through Fridays, 10 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—A show in which Jewish themes are explored in video art: installations by Juan Downey, Beryl Korot, and Grahame Weinbren and Roberta Friedman, mounted in three separate galleries; and six videos that run on a single, continuous tape for just over two hours, including "Harold's Bar Mitzvah," by Bart Friedman, and "Women in Camps," by Barbara Rosenthal. Through Sept. 1. (Open daily except Fridays and Saturdays. Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A comprehensive exhibit of the works of Beatrix Potter (1866-1943) which includes watercolors of her familiar subjects (Peter Rabbit, Jemima Puddle-Duck) and her not so familiar subjects—insects, plants, and fossils. Through Aug. 21. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The Uffizi Gallery, in Florence, repository of nearly thirteen hundred artists' self-portraits, has sent a selection of thirty—by Andrea del Sarto, Annibale Carracci, Walter Crane, and others—in an exchange show with the National Academy, which sent a selection of its thirteen hundred self-portraits to Florence this spring. Through July 31. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—A show of works by the Swiss sculptor Markus Raetz. Through Sunday, July 10. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

SPORTS

(The ticket-information number for Shea Stadium is 1-718 507-8499, and for Yankee Stadium 293-6000.)

Baseball—**METS** at Shea Stadium: Vs. Cincinnati, Monday through Wednesday, July 4-6, at 7:35. . . . **YANKEES** at Yankee Stadium: Vs. Kansas City, Friday and Saturday, July 8-9, at 7:30, and Sunday, July 10, at 1:30.

Racing—At **BELMONT:** Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1; through Monday, Aug. 1. The Suburban Handicap, Monday, July 4. . . . **MONMOUTH PARK,** Oceanport, N.J.: Weekdays at 1:30. . . . **ATLANTIC CITY RACE COURSE,** McKee City, N.J.: Mondays and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:15.

Trotting—At **MEADOWLANDS:** Weeknights at 7:30; through Friday, Aug. 19. . . . **YONKERS RACEWAY:** Nightly at 8, and Tuesdays at 1; through Wednesday, Aug. 3. . . . **SARATOGA RACEWAY,** Saratoga Springs: Weeknights, except Monday, July 4, at 7:45; Monday, July 4, at 6.

MUSIC

New York City Opera—Opening performances of the season, which runs through Sunday, Nov. 20. Wednesday evening, July 6: "The Merry Widow," with Leigh Munro, Ruth Golden, Richard White, and Paul Austin Kelly; conducted by Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Thursday evening, July 7: "La Bohème," with Frances Ginsberg, Margaret Cusack, Robert Grayson, and Stanley Wexler; Scott Bergeson. . . . ¶ Friday evening, July 8: "Cavalleria Rusticana," with Leslie Richards, Stefano Algieri, and Rodger Hugh Wangerin; and "Pagliacci," with Marianna Christos, John Absalom, Pablo Elvira, and Kenneth Shaw. Sergiu Comissiona conducting both. . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, July 9: "Die Zauberflöte," with Elizabeth Hynes, Rachel Rosales, Gran Wilson, Stephen Dickson, and Rodney Godshall; Sergiu Comissiona. . . . ¶ Saturday evening, July 9, and Tuesday evening, July 12: A new production of "Rigoletto," with Faith Esham, Susanne Marsee, Frederick Burchinal, and Richard Leech; Elio Boncompagni. . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, July 13: "La Bohème," with Frances Ginsberg, Margaret Cusack, Robert Grayson, and Stanley Wexler; Scott Bergeson. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Evenings at 8. Matinées at 2.)

Mostly Mozart Festival—Opening concerts of the series, which will run through Saturday, Aug. 27. Tuesday and Wednesday, July 12-13, at 8: Gerard Schwarz conducting the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra, with Vladimir Feltsman, piano, and Frederica von Stade, mezzo-soprano. (Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424.)

Elaine Comparone and Bach Family Strings—Harpsichord and a chamber ensemble in a program of early concertos and sonatas by Mozart and Haydn. (St. Michael's Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. Wednesday, July 13, at 8. For tickets, call 666-9427.)

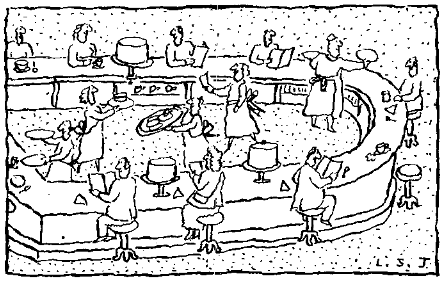
THE GREAT OUTDOORS

New York Shakespeare Festival—Free performances of **MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING,** with Blythe Danner, Kevin Kline, Jerry Stiller, and Phoebe Cates, will run through Sunday, July 24. The first of two productions to be presented in the Delacorte Theatre this summer. (Central Park near W. 81st St. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. For information about tickets, which are required, call 861-7277.)

Music Festival on the Pier—The Miller beer people's summer series. Wednesday, July 6: Jimmy Buffett. . . . ¶ Tuesday, July 12: Dion. (Pier 84, Twelfth Ave. at 45th St. Evenings at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 249-8870.)

New York Grand Opera—Vincent La Selva conducting performances of "Rigoletto." (Central Park Band Shell, mid-Park at 72nd St. Thursday, July 7, at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

National Chorale—Martin Josman directing a program of music from Broadway. (Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center. Saturday, July 9, at 7:30.)



IN THE COUNTRY

Summerfare—Opening performances of a three-week season. **"ACTUAL SHŌ,"** a theatre piece by George Coates that makes use of singers, dancers, electronic devices, and a swivel-cone stage. With music by Marc Ream. (Friday, July 8, and Wednesday, July 13, at 8:30.) . . . **"DUBBELSPOOR,"** a dance piece with mirrors, based on a text by Samuel Beckett, and performed by Beppie Blankert and Caroline Dokter. (Friday, July 8, at 8:30; Saturday and Sunday, July 9-10, at 7; and Wednesday, July 13, at 8:30.) . . . **"A BONE TO PICK,"** with dance by Laurie Booth and music by Harry de Wit. (Friday and Saturday, July 8-9, at 8:30, and Sunday, July 10, at 7.) . . . **LONDON SINFONIETTA,** conducted by Paul Daniel and George Benjamin, in two programs of contemporary music. (Saturday and Sunday, July 9-10, at 8.) (State University of New York at Purchase. For information about tickets and about round-trip bus transportation from Lincoln Center, call 1-914 253-5900.)

Caramoor Music Festival—Thursday, July 7, at 4:15: The St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble, with Peter Orth, piano. . . . ¶ Friday, July 8, at 9: The St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble in an all-Mozart program. . . . ¶ Saturday, July 9, at 8:30: Julius Rudel conducting the Orchestra of St. Luke's, with Joseph Anderer, horn, and Christopher Parkening, classical guitarist. . . . ¶ Sunday, July 10, at 5:30: Richard Stoltzman, clarinet, and Irma Vallecillo, piano. (Katonah, N.Y. Through Sunday, Aug. 21. Trains that leave Grand Central Terminal on Saturdays at 2:48 and 5:48, and on Sundays at 3:48, are met at Katonah by buses for Caramoor. For information about tickets and trains, call 1-914 232-5035.)

Waterloo Festival Orchestra—This week's program is conducted by James DePreist, with Rudolf Firkušný, piano. The season of weekly concerts runs through Saturday, July 23. (Waterloo Village, Stanhope, N.J. 1-201 347-4700. Saturday, July 9, at 8:30.)

Tanglewood—Thursday, July 7, at 8:30: The Vermeer String Quartet, with Leon Fleisher, piano. . . . ¶ Friday, July 8, at 9: Seiji Ozawa conducting the Boston Symphony, with Peter Serkin, piano, in a Brahms-Ravel program. . . . ¶ Saturday, July 9, at 8:30: Yuri Temirkanov conducting the orchestra, with Malcolm Frager, piano. . . . ¶ Sunday, July 10, at 2:30: Helmuth Rilling conducting the orchestra and John Oliver directing the Tanglewood Festival Chorus in an all-Bach program. (Lenox, Mass. Through Sunday, Aug. 28. For information about tickets, call 1-413 637-1940.)

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival—Through Saturday, July 9: "The Roots of Creole," a program of Portuguese, African, and South American dance and music. . . . ¶ Tuesday through Saturday, July 12-16: The American Ballroom Theatre. (Becket, Mass. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8; Fridays at 8:30; and Saturdays at 2 and 8:30. Through Saturday, Aug. 27. For information about tickets, call 1-413 243-0745.)

Saratoga Performing Arts Center—Performances by the **NEW YORK CITY BALLET** of a three-week season that will run through Saturday, July 23. Wednesday evening, July 6: "Ivesiana," "Woodland Sketches," "Tarantella," and "Ecstatic Orange." . . . ¶ Thursday matinée, July 7: "Interplay," "Tea-Rose," and "Stars and Stripes" (with guest artists William Bolcom and Joan Morris). . . . ¶ Thursday evening, July 7: "Ivesiana," "Woodland Sketches," "Tarantella," and "Ecstatic Orange." . . . ¶ Friday evening, July 8, and Saturday matinée, July 9: "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue," "The Newcomers," "Calcium Light Night," and "Who Cares?" . . . ¶ Saturday evening, July 9: "Glass Pieces," "Tanzspiel," and "Stars and Stripes" (with Mr. Bolcom and Miss Morris). . . . ¶ Tuesday evening, July 12: "Glass Pieces," "Ives, Songs," and "I'm Old Fashioned." . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, July 13: "The Bounding Line," "The Waltz Project," and "Space." (Saratoga Springs. Evenings at 8:15. Matinées at 2. For information about tickets, call 1-518 587-3330.)

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

EAST SIDE

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
Through July 7: A program of avant-garde films made between 1939 and 1977.
From July 8: (Separate admissions) "Loose Connections" (directed by Richard Eyre); "A Day on the Grand Canal with the Emperor of China" (Philip Haas) and "A Bigger Splash" (1984; Jack Hazan), both with David Hockney; and "Joan of the Angels?" (1962; Jerzy Kawalerowicz; in Polish).

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Red Heat" (Walter Hill), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Belushi.
Theatre 2: Through July 5: "Funny Farm" (George Roy Hill), with Chevy Chase. From July 6: "Short Circuit 2" (Kenneth Johnson), with Fisher Stevens and Michael McKean.
Theatre 3: "Hairspray" (†).

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Who Framed Roger Rabbit" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Big Business" (†).

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
"Bull Durham" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 2: "Willow" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Presidio" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
Through July 7: "The Great Outdoors" (Howard Deutch), with Dan Aykroyd and John Candy.
From July 8: "Arthur 2 on the Rocks" (Bud Yorkin), with Dudley Moore, Liza Minnelli, and John Gielgud.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Moonstruck" (†).

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Through July 7: "Beethoven's Nephew" (Paul Morrissey).
From July 8: To be announced.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Big" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
Through July 5: "The Moderns" (†).
From July 6: "License to Drive" (Greg Beeman), with Corey Haim and Corey Feldman.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: Through July 7: "Crocodile Dundee II" (John Cornell), with Paul Hogan. From July 8: "Phantasm II" (Don Coscarelli).
Theatre 2: "Funny Farm" (George Roy Hill), with Chevy Chase.

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
Through July 7: "Absolution" (1979; Anthony Page), with Richard Burton.
From July 8: To be announced.

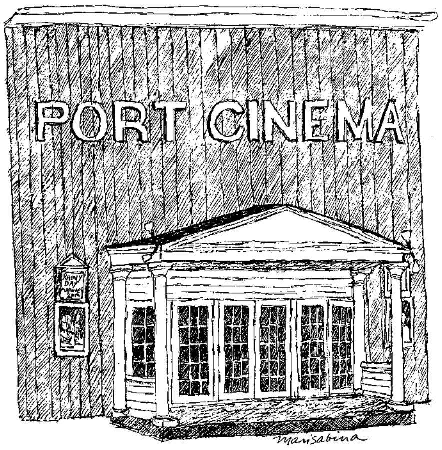
Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Red Heat" (Walter Hill), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Belushi.
Theatre 2: "Who Framed Roger Rabbit" (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: "A World Apart" (†).
Theatre 2: "Big Business" (†).

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: Through July 5: "Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy. From July 6: "Short Circuit 2" (Kenneth Johnson), with Fisher Stevens and Michael McKean.
Theatre 2: "Coming to America."

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
Through July 7: "The Great Outdoors" (Howard Deutch), with Dan Aykroyd and John Candy.
From July 8: "Arthur 2 on the Rocks" (Bud Yorkin), with Dudley Moore, Liza Minnelli, and John Gielgud.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Bull Durham" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Presidio" (†).



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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 13.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"The Unbearable Lightness of Being" (†).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Willow" (†).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
Through July 5: "Crocodile Dundee II" (John Cornell), with Paul Hogan.
From July 6: "License to Drive" (Greg Beeman), with Corey Haim and Corey Feldman.

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 2: "Red Heat" (Walter Hill), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Belushi.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Big" (†).
Theatre 2: "Big Business" (†).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatres open in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through July 12: "Beirut: The Last Home Movie" (1987; directed by Jennifer Fox), a documentary. From July 13: "The Love Suicides at Sonezaki" (1981; Midori Kurisaki; in Japanese).
Theatre 2: See listings under "Revival Houses."

Bleecker St. Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: Through July 7: "The Unbearable Lightness of Being" (†). From July 8: "A Taxing Woman" (†).
Theatre 2: "Tampopo" (†).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: Through July 7: "Crocodile Dundee II" (John Cornell), with Paul Hogan. From July 8: To be announced.
Theatre 2: "Big Business" (†).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
"The Decline of Western Civilization Part II: The Metal Years" (Penelope Spheeris).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Big" (†).
Theatre 2: Through July 7: "White Mischief" (†). From July 8: "Arthur 2 on the Rocks" (Bud Yorkin), with Dudley Moore, Liza Minnelli, and John Gielgud.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Absolution" (1979; Anthony Page), with Richard Burton.
Theatre 2: Through July 7: "The Manchurian Candidate" (†). From July 8: "The Kitchen Toto" (Harry Hook).
Theatre 3: "Candy Mountain" (†).
Theatre 4: "Aria," ten episodes by ten directors; and "Light Years" (René Laloux).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: Through July 7: "The Great Outdoors" (Howard Deutch), with Dan Aykroyd and John Candy. From July 8: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through July 7: "Big" (†). From July 8: To be announced.
Theatre 3: "Bull Durham" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Willow" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Who Framed Roger Rabbit" (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Au Revoir les Enfants" ("Goodbye, Children") (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Shy People" (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Jill Clayburgh and Barbara Hershey.

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
"White Mischief" (†).

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)
"The Last Emperor" (†).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"A Handful of Dust" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
Through July 7: "The Manchurian Candidate" (†).
From July 8: To be announced.

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Willow" (†).

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Commissar" (1967; Alexander Askoldov; in Russian).
Theatre 2: "Bagdad Café" (†).
Theatre 3: "A Taxing Woman" (†).

Cinema Studio I and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Babette's Feast" (†).
Theatre 2: "Wings of Desire" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
Through July 5: "The Great Outdoors" (Howard Deutch), with Dan Aykroyd and John Candy.
From July 6: "License to Drive" (Greg Beeman), with Corey Haim and Corey Feldman.

Embassy 72nd St. I and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: "Big" (†).
Theatre 2: "Big Business" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "The Presidio" (†).
Theatre 2: Through July 5: "Crocodile Dundee II" (John Cornell), with Paul Hogan. From July 6: "Short Circuit 2" (Kenneth Johnson), with Fisher Stevens and Michael McKean.
Theatre 3: "Bull Durham" (†).
Theatre 4: "Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 5: "Red Heat" (Walter Hill), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Belushi.
Theatre 6: Through July 7: "Coming to America." From July 8 (tentative): "Arthur 2 on the Rocks" (Bud Yorkin), with Dudley Moore, Liza Minnelli, and John Gielgud.

Metro Cinema I and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: Through July 7: "The Milagro Beanfield War" (†). From July 8: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through July 7: "The Manchurian Candidate" (†). From July 8: To be announced.

Columbia Cinema, B'way at 103rd. (316-6660)
"Who Framed Roger Rabbit" (†).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: Through July 7: "Funny Farm"

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

(George Roy Hill), with Chevy Chase. From July 8: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through July 7: "The Unbearable Lightness of Being" (†). From July 8: To be announced.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Bull Durham" (†).
Theatre 2: "Red Heat" (directed by Walter Hill), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Belushi.
Theatre 3: "Rambo III" (Peter Macdonald), with Sylvester Stallone and Richard Crenna.
Theatre 4: Through July 7: "Rambo III." From July 8: "Arthur 2 on the Rocks" (Bud Yorkin), with Dudley Moore, Liza Minnelli, and John Gielgud.
Theatre 5: Through July 5: "Salsa" (Boaz Davidson). From July 6: "Short Circuit 2" (Kenneth Johnson), with Fisher Stevens and Michael McKean.
Theatre 6: Through July 5: "Maniac Cop" (William Lustig). From July 6: "Short Circuit 2."

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
"Big Business" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "The Presidio" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Presidio" (†).
Theatre 4: "Crocodile Dundee II" (John Cornell), with Paul Hogan.

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy.

Movieland, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
Through July 7: "The Great Outdoors" (Howard Deutch), with Dan Aykroyd and John Candy.
From July 8: "Phantasm II" (Don Coscarelli).

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Funny Farm" (George Roy Hill), with Chevy Chase.
Theatre 2: "Big" (†).

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)
Through July 5: "Poltergeist III" (Gary Sherman), with Heather O'Rourke, Tom Skerritt, Nancy Allen, and Zelda Rubinstein.
From July 6: "License to Drive" (Greg Beeman), with Corey Haim and Corey Feldman.

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
July 4: "Sabrina" (1954; directed by Billy Wilder), with Humphrey Bogart, Audrey Hepburn, William Holden, and John Williams; and "Play It Again, Sam" (1972; Herbert Ross), with Woody Allen.
July 5-6: "Romeo and Juliet" (1968; Franco Zeffirelli), with Leonard Whiting, Olivia Hussey, John McEnery, Michael York, Pat Heywood, and Milo O'Shea.
July 7-9: "Trouble in Paradise" (1932; Ernst Lubitsch), with Kay Francis, Herbert Marshall, Miriam Hopkins, and Edward Everett Horton; and "Midnight" (†).

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July 10-11: "Seconds" (†); and "Psycho" (1960; Alfred Hitchcock), with Anthony Perkins, Vera Miles, John Gavin, and Janet Leigh.
July 12-13: "The Ten Commandments" (1956 †).

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through July 5: Two different programs of Warner Brothers cartoons—one featuring Bugs Bunny and the other Daffy Duck.
July 6-7: "Manhattan" (1979; Woody Allen), with Allen, Diane Keaton, Michael Murphy, and Meryl Streep; and "Annie Hall" (1977; Woody Allen), with Allen and Diane Keaton.
July 8-9: "Trash" (†) and "Heat" (†).
July 10: "The Mirror" (1974; Andrei Tarkovsky; in Russian); and "A Summer to Remember" (1961; Georgi Daneliya; in Russian).
July 11-12: Two different programs of Warner Brothers cartoons, one featuring Porky Pig.
From July 13: "School Daze" (1988; Spike Lee); and "She's Gotta Have It" (1986; Spike Lee), with Tracy Camila Johns, Tommy Redmond Hicks, John Canada Terrell, and Lee.

Film Forum 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Through July 7: "Wedding in Galilee" (1987; Michel Khleifi; in Arabic and Hebrew).
July 8-10: "The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp" (1943; Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger), with Roger Livesey.
July 11: "Blackmail" (1929; Alfred Hitchcock), with Anny Ondra, Cyril Ritchard, and Sara Allgood; "Champagne" (1928; Alfred Hitchcock; a silent film), with Betty Balfour and Gordon Harker; and "Lazybones" (1935; Michael Powell).
July 12: "I Know Where I'm Going" (1945; Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger), with Wendy Hiller and Roger Livesey; and "One of Our Aircraft Is Missing" (1942; Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger), with Godfrey Tearle.
From July 13: "Peeping Tom" (1960; Michael Powell), with Karl Boehm and Moira Shearer; and "Small Back Room" (1952; Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger), with David Farrar.

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)
July 4: "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" (1953; Howard Hawks), with Jane Russell and Marilyn Monroe; and "Some Like It Hot" (1959; Billy Wilder), with Marilyn Monroe, Tony Curtis, and Jack Lemmon.
July 5: "Don't Look Back" (1967; Donn Pennebaker), a documentary about Bob Dylan; and "Monterey Pop" (1969; Donn Pennebaker), a documentary on the 1967 Monterey International Pop Festival.
July 6: "The 400 Blows" (1959; François Truffaut; in French), with Jean-Pierre Léaud; and "Jules and Jim" (1962; François Truffaut; in French), with Jeanne Moreau, Oskar Werner, and Henri Serre.
July 7: "Seconds" (†); and "Seven Days in May" (1964; John Frankenheimer), with Burt Lancaster, Kirk Douglas, Fredric March, and Ava Gardner.
July 8-9: "Housekeeping" (1987; Bill Forsyth), with Christine Lahti; and "Local Hero" (†).
July 10-11: "Cammina Cammina" (1983; Ermanno Olmi; in Italian); and "Flowers of St. Francis" (1949; Roberto Rossellini; in Italian), with Aldo Fabrizi.
July 12: "To Be or Not to Be" (1942 †); and "Trouble in Paradise" (1932; Ernst Lubitsch), with Kay Francis, Herbert Marshall, Miriam Hopkins, and Edward Everett Horton.
July 13: "Zelly and Me" (1988; Tina Rathborne), with Isabella Rossellini; and "The Fallen Idol" (†).

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
July 4: "Suddenly, Last Summer" (1959; Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Elizabeth Taylor, Montgomery Clift, and Katharine Hepburn; and "Holiday" (1938; George Cukor), with Katharine Hepburn, Cary Grant, Lew Ayres, Edward Everett Horton, and Doris Nolan.
July 5: "Terror by Night" (1946; Roy William Neill), the thirteenth in the Basil Rathbone–Nigel Bruce Sherlock Holmes–Dr. Watson series; and "Dressed to Kill" (1946; Roy William Neill), the fourteenth, and last, in the Rathbone-Bruce Holmes-Watson series.
July 6: "Back Street" (1932; John M. Stahl), with Irene Dunne and John Boles; and "Magnificent Obsession" (1935; John M. Stahl), with Irene Dunne, Charles Butterworth, and Robert Taylor.
July 7: "The Blue Gardenia" (1953; Fritz Lang), with Anne Baxter, Richard Conte, and Ann Sothern; and "The Woman in the Window" (†).
July 8-9: "My Man Godfrey" (1936; Gregory La Cava), with Carole Lombard, William Powell, Mischa Auer, and Alice Brady; and "Nothing Sacred" (1937; William Wellman), with Carole Lombard, Fredric March, Walter Connolly, and Charles Winninger.
July 10: "Pandora's Box" (†); and "Diary of a Lost Girl" (1929; G. W. Pabst; a German silent film), with Louise Brooks.
July 11: "Carnival in Flanders" (1936; Jacques Feyder; in French), with Louis Jouvet; and "Toni" (1935; Jean Renoir; in French).
July 12: "Separate Tables" (1958; Delbert Mann), with Rita Hayworth, Deborah Kerr, David Niven, Burt Lancaster, and Wendy Hiller; and "Brief Encounter" (†).
July 13: "The Heiress" (1949; William Wyler), with Olivia de Havilland, Montgomery Clift, and Ralph Richardson; and "A Place in the Sun" (1951; George Stevens), with Montgomery Clift, Elizabeth Taylor, and Shelley Winters.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

Theatre 1: Through July 4: See listings under "The Festival," on page 6. . . . ¶ July 8 at 2:30: "Rio Grande" (1950; directed by John Ford), with John Wayne, Maureen O'Hara, and Ben Johnson. . . . ¶ July 8 at 6: "She Wore a Yellow Ribbon" (1949; John Ford), with John Wayne, Joanne Dru, and John Agar. . . . ¶ July 9 at 2: "One Hour with You" (1932; Ernst Lubitsch and George Cukor), with Maurice Chevalier, Jeanette MacDonald, and Genevieve Tobin. . . . ¶ July 9 at 5: "The Bat Whispers" (1930; Roland West), with Chester Morris, Una Merkel, and Maude Eburne. . . . ¶ July 10 at 2: "Ramrod" (1947; André de Toth), with Veronica Lake, Joel McCrea, and Arleen Whelan. . . . ¶ July 10 at 5: "Pitfall" (1948; André de Toth), with Dick Powell, Lizabeth Scott, and Raymond Burr. . . . ¶ July 12 at 6: "Becky Sharp" (1935; Rouben Mamoulian), with Miriam Hopkins, Cedric Hardwicke, and Frances Dee.

Theatre 2: Through July 10: See listings under "The Festival," on page 6. . . . ¶ July 11 at 2:30: "The Hearst Metrotone Newsreel Collection: Preserved Footage, 1919-40." . . . ¶ July 11 at 6: "The Toll of the Sea" (1922; Chester Franklin; a silent film), with Anna May Wong and Kenneth Harlan; and other examples of early color film processes. . . . ¶ July 12 at 2:30: Paper prints, films set in New York.

French Institute–Alliance Française, 22 E. 60th St. (355-6100)—July 6 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Topaze" (1933; Louis Gasnier; in French, with English subtitles), with Louis Jouvet. . . . ¶ July 13 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Marius" (1931; Alexander Korda; in French, with English subtitles), with Pierre Fresnay, Raimu, Alida Rouffe, Orane Demazis, and Fernand Charpin.

Murder, Mystery and Mayhem—A series of films set in New York City during the thirties, forties, and fifties. July 10 at 2: "The Saint in New York" (1938; Ben Holmes), with Louis Hayward; and "Charlie Chan on Broadway" (1937; Eugene Ford), with Warner Oland. (New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St. 873-3400.)

Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. (82nd St. entrance on Tuesdays) (570-3949)—July 5: "Of Human Bondage" (1934; John Cromwell), with Leslie Howard and Bette Davis. . . . ¶ July 6: "Sunset Boulevard" (1950; Billy Wilder), with Gloria Swanson, William Holden, and Erich von Stroheim. . . . ¶ July 12: "The Petrified Forest" (1936; Archie Mayo), with Leslie Howard, Bette Davis, and Humphrey Bogart. . . . ¶ July 13: "The Big Carnival" ("Ace in the Hole;" 1951; Billy Wilder), with Kirk Douglas and Jan Sterling. (All showings at 8. Tickets available one hour before performance time, on the night of the performance.)

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(Unsigned notes are by Pauline Kael; others are by Terrence Rafferty.)

Au Revoir les Enfants (Goodbye, Children)—It's set in Occupied France in 1944, when the writer-director Louis Malle was an eleven-year-old at a Catholic boys' boarding school near Fontainebleau that sheltered several Jewish boys. The Gestapo learned they were there, and sent the ones they found to Auschwitz, and the headmaster to a work camp. One of the Jewish boys was in Malle's class, but Malle didn't get to know him well and didn't realize that he was Jewish. For the dramatic purposes of the movie, he has conceived a close friendship between his alter ego, the fair-haired Julien Quentin (Gaspard Manesse), and the dark boy who is using the false name Jean Bonnet (Raphaël Fejtö). But nothing comes into clear focus—not the boys' attitudes, not even the images. The film (especially the first half) seems padded, formal, discreet. It's like watching a faded French classic. And there's something unseemly about the way Jean is used as an aesthetic object—spiritual, sensitive, exotic. With Francine Racette as Julien's mother and François Négret as the informer. In French. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/22/88.) (Festival.)

Babette's Feast—In a village on Denmark's gray, blustery Jutland peninsula, sometime in the eighteen-eighties, Babette (Stéphane Audran), the French servant of a pair of elderly unmarried sisters (Birgitte Federspiel and Bodil Kjer), prepares a special dinner for her employers and their guests—a lavish, one-time-only orgy of haute cuisine served to a group of devout Lutherans who are used to receiving the Lord's bounty in the form of grim little slabs of boiled fish. Adapting one of Isak Dinesen's "Anecdotes of Destiny," Gabriel Axel, the writer-director, tells this simple tale simply. He establishes a lulling, bedtime-story tone right from the start, perhaps too successfully: our eyelids begin to seem very heavy after twenty minutes or so. The whole thing turns out to be about the consolations of art, and the union of "righteousness and bliss." The film is more righteous than blissful: a more austere celebration of the pleasures of the senses would be difficult to imagine. In Danish and French. —T.R. (Cinema Studio.)

Bagdad Café—After an argument with her husband on a godforsaken stretch of highway at the edge of the Mojave Desert, a fat German tourist named Jasmin (Marianne Sägebrecht) checks into a crummy motel attached to the equally crummy Bagdad Café. This movie, the first in English by the German director Percy Adlon (whose 1985 "Sugarbaby" was also a vehicle for Sägebrecht), is filled with eccentrics who are apparently meant to be lovable. The rather precious conceit of the film is that Jasmin somehow brings the outcast characters together in a kind of extended family; by the end, the Bagdad Café has been transformed into a popular roadside cabaret, with everyone contributing a specialty (Jasmin does magic tricks). The American performers are trapped in a movie that treats them as merely exotic—waxwork grotesques waiting to be animated by a mysterious German touch. Eleonore Adlon and Christopher Doherty collaborated with the director on the screenplay. With CCH Pounder, Jack Palance, and Christine Kaufmann.—T.R. (Lincoln Plaza.)

Big—A formula fantasy film that has been directed very gently and tactfully by Penny Marshall; she sleepwalks you through the script (by Gary Ross and Anne Spielberg) about a twelve-year-old boy who wishes he were big and is magically given the body of a man in his thirties—Tom Hanks. There are neat, flaky moments, but everything has a tepid inevitability, and even as you smile you may be groaning inwardly, because "Big" is dedicated to awakening the child in all of us. Of course, the Hanks character isn't ready to function as an adult; he wants to go back. The movie wants to go back, too. It's nostalgic for childhood, for suburbia, for innocent fun. (It isn't about kids wanting to be big; it's about grownups feeling little.) In its wholesome way, "Big" is selling the slick wonders of immaturity. It turns prepubescence into a dream state. With the slyly sexy Elizabeth Perkins, and good comic work by Robert Loggia and Jared Rushton. Also with John Heard, David Moscow, Jon Lovitz, and Mercedes Ruehl. (6/27/88) (Gotham Cinema, 86th Street East Twin, Art Greenwich Twin, Embassy 72nd St., and National Twin. . . . ¶ 23rd St. West Triplex; through July 7.)

Big Business—Bette Midler and Lily Tomlin, in a farce about two sets of identical twins accidently mismatched at birth. They're the Ratliffs, who live in a backwoods Southern town, and they're the Sheltons, who run the New York conglomerate, Moramax. The four women and their various courtiers, flunkies, and love objects wind up spending the weekend at the Plaza Hotel. The film often looks third class, and the director, Jim Abrahams, doesn't have the knack of making the details click into place. You're aware of an awful lot of mistaken-identity plot and aware of how imprecise most of it is. Yet the picture moves along, spattering the air with throwaway gags, and a minute after something misfires you're laughing out loud. Fred Ward, who plays Tomlin's down-home suitor, is serenely unself-conscious, and takes over as the film's hero. And Midler breezes through, kicking one gong after another. Far more free and inspired here than she was in "Outrageous Fortune" or "Ruthless People," she plays the poor girl as a supplicant abasing herself before the world's goodies. She's pure appetite. And as the mogul of Moramax she flips up her collar and her gesture bespeaks perfect self-satisfaction. (Chaplin did this sort of thing, and he didn't do it better.) With Leo Burmester as the bum. Script credited to Dori Pierson and Marc Rubel. (6/27/88) (Bay Cinema, Cinema II, 86th Street East Twin, Waverly, Embassy 72nd St., and Embassy 1.)

Brief Encounter (1946)—David Lean directed this romantic expansion of Noël Coward's one-act play "Still Life"—an evocation of the emotions that lie dormant in respectable, middle-class existence. Celia Johnson and Trevor Howard play the pair who fall passionately in love but agree not to see each other again and return to their responsibilities. A celebrated, craftsmanlike tearjerker, and incredibly neat. Coward's material is implicitly condescending even while he's making the two heroic. With Stanley Holloway, Joyce Carey, Cyril Raymond, Irene Handl, and Valentine Dyall. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; July 12.)

Bull Durham—Written and directed by Ron Shelton, this sunny romantic comedy has the kind of dizzying off-center literacy that Preston Sturges' pictures had. It's a satirical celebration of our native jauntiness and wit; it takes us into a subculture that's like a bawdy adjunct of childhood—minor-league baseball. Kevin Costner plays the smart, hyper-articulate catcher Crash, and comes through with his first wide-awake, star performance; at his best, he's as berserkly ironic as Jack Nicholson is at some of his peaks. After playing for twelve years, Crash arrives in Durham, North Carolina, to join the Durham Bulls and learns that he's been brought in to train baby-faced Nuke (Tim Robbins), a wild young rookie pitcher who is destined to move up. Susan Sarandon plays the beautiful, passionate Annie Savoy, a baseball fanatic who has her own scorecard: "There's never been a ballplayer slept with me who didn't have the best year of his career." What you keep reacting to is the film's exuberant doodles. With Jenny Robertson, Trey Wilson, William O'Leary, Robert Wuhl, and Max Patkin. (6/27/88) (Murray Hill, Loews New York Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Candy Mountain—Rudy Wurlitzer wrote the screenplay of this low-budget road movie and directed it in collaboration with Robert Frank. It's the story of a dim, unsuccessful young New York musician (Kevin J. O'Connor) who makes a deal with a rock star (David Johansen) and a couple of guys in business suits to track down a brilliant guitar-maker named Elmore Silk (Harris Yulin); the idea, of course, is to acquire his guitars, commodities that have become rare and fantastically valuable since Silk's disappearance from the scene years ago. On his journey through upstate New York and eastern Canada, the eager punk loses a couple of cars, spends all his money, gets arrested, trades observations on the romance of the road and the meaning of life with an assortment of oddballs, losers, freaks, and geezers, and eventually finds the great man holed up in a town in Nova Scotia, where the whole eventful quest turns out to be—surprise—sort of meaningless. This may sound dreary, and it's certainly thin, but the movie has a surprisingly genial spirit. Frank, a great photographer ("The Americans") who has also made several 16-mm. films, knows how to shoot the seedy roadside landscape so that we don't feel oppressed by the bleakness of it all. Working with the cinematographer Pio Corradi, he keeps startling us, offhandedly, with the beauty of thrown-together places and lives. The lively cast includes an eclectic bunch of musicians: Tom Waits, Leon Redbone, Dr. John, and Rita MacNeil.—T.R. (Quad Cinema.)

The Fallen Idol (1948)—Carol Reed and Graham Greene collaborated on this tricky, highly original thriller. It's about the muddled attempt of an eight-year-old boy (Bobby Henrey), the son of the French Ambassador to England, to protect the Embassy butler, Baines (Ralph Richardson), whom he idolizes, from a charge of murder. The plot is just about perfect, and there are two wonderful parallel episodes, when the child attempts to impart vital information, which two sets of adults ignore because they think he's just prattling nonsense. Maybe it's too deliberate, though, with its stylized lighting and its rigid pacing—you wait an extra beat between the low-key lines of dialogue. It's a polite thriller—which is close to a contradiction in terms. With Michèle Morgan and Sonia Dresdel. (Thalia SoHo; July 13.)

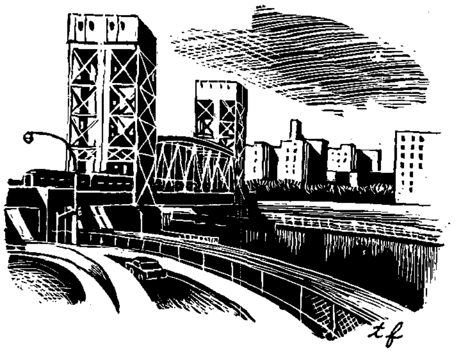
Hairspray—The writer-director John Waters treats the message movie as a genre to be parodied, just like the teenpic. Combining the two, he comes up with a pop dadaist musical comedy, set in Baltimore in 1962. Waters loves narrative, and he has half a dozen plots crisscrossing each other. In the middle are the spherical Mrs. Edna Turnblad (played by the male actor Divine) and her baby-blimp daughter, Tracy (Ricki Lake); they wear matching mother-and-daughter outfits. Tracy, who's the newest teen-age dancer on "The Corny Collins Show," discovers that black kids aren't allowed to take part and she becomes a leader in the fight for integration. Meanwhile, Divine watches over Tracy and preens like a mother hen. There's a what-the-hell quality to Divine's acting which the film needs; it would be too close to a real teenpic without it. When Divine's Edna Turnblad is onscreen in the sleeveless dresses she's partial to, the movie has something like the lunacy of a W. C. Fields in drag. With Ruth Brown, Debbie Harry, Sonny Bono, Jerry Stiller, Shawn Thompson, Ric Ocasek, Pia Zadora, Jo Ann Havrilla, and Waters himself as a sicko psychiatrist. (3/7/88) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex.)

A Handful of Dust—With James Wilby, directed by Charles Sturridge. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Paris.)

Heat (1972)—A slack, depressive Paul Morrissey version of "Sunset Boulevard," with Joe Dallesandro as a stud hustler and Sylvia Miles as the predatory star in the big mansion. It's meant to be a funny exploitation movie, but the comic moments are rare. Produced by Andy Warhol. (Cinema Village; July 8-9.)

The Last Emperor—Bernardo Bertolucci tells the story of Pu Yi, who was not quite three when, in 1908, he was set on the Dragon Throne in Peking's Forbidden City and became the titular ruler of a third of the people on earth. After being deposed and then enthroned again in Japanese-occupied Manchuria, he was in Soviet custody for five years, and then spent ten years being "reëducated" in a Chinese war-criminals prison. The movie doesn't have the juicy absurdity that seems to pour right out of the historical story. And it suppresses the drama. But it has pictorial grace and a dull fascination. Bertolucci presents Pu Yi (John Lone) as a man without will or backbone who lives his life as spectacle—who watches his life go by. And so we're given a historical pageant without a protagonist. There's an idea here, but it's a dippy idea—it results in a passive movie. With Joan Chen and Peter O'Toole. Cinematography by Vittorio Storaro; the film shows the palaces and courtyards of the two-hundred-and-fifty-acre Forbidden City. 2 hours and 46 minutes. (11/30/87) (Carnegie Screening Room.)

Local Hero (1983)—A magical comedy by the Scottish writer-director Bill Forsyth. The story is about an American mergers-and-acquisitions executive (played by Peter Riegert) who is sent to Scotland to buy a fishing village and experiences something new to him—happiness. Forsyth is rarely explicit about anything—the picture is like one of those lovely Elizabethan songs that are full of tra-la-la-la-las. Burt Lancaster brings an imperial, romantic aura to the role of Riegert's boss—an oil tycoon whose penthouse includes a private planetarium. Also with Denis Lawson, Peter Capaldi, Jenny Seagrove, Fulton MacKay, Chris Rozyki, and Jennifer Black. (Thalia SoHo; July 8-9.)



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The Manchurian Candidate (1962)—A daring, funny, and far-out thriller about political extremists. George Axelrod adapted the Richard Condon novel, and John Frankenheimer came to life as a director. This picture may be the most sophisticated political satire ever made in Hollywood. With Angela Lansbury, Frank Sinatra, Laurence Harvey, and James Gregory. (Quad Cinema, Cinema 3, and Metro Cinema; through July 7.)

Midnight (1939)—Rapturous fun. Slim-hipped, wide-eyed Claudette Colbert, stranded in Paris in an evening gown, gets involved with rich, aristocratic John Barrymore, who is trying to regain the affections of his straying wife, Mary Astor, who is hooked on dapper gigolo Francis Lederer. This romantic comedy, directed by Mitchell Leisen, is one of the authentic delights of the thirties. The cast includes Hedda Hopper, Monty Woolley, Elaine Barrie, Rex O'Malley, and Don Ameche. Actually, Ameche has an important role; he isn't bad—for Ameche. (Biograph Cinema; July 7-9.)

The Milagro Beanfield War—The story is about a conflict over water rights in New Mexico between the struggling Hispanic community and a bunch of powerful developers who are buying up the surrounding land. Robert Redford's film of John Nichols' novel treats the material as an occasion for Capra-like populist comedy, and the feel-good, triumph-of-the-little-guy stuff overwhelms the jokes—the same thing often happened to Capra, who knew how to direct comedy, so it's not a surprise that it also happens to Redford, who doesn't. But he's assembled a lively, talented cast here, and their little bits of business keep the movie watchable. John Heard, Rubén Blades, Julie Carmen, James Gammon, Daniel Stern, and M. Emmet Walsh all seem to be having a good time, and Redford's direction is best when it simply relaxes and lets their vitality carry the movie. Also with Chick Vennera, Sonia Braga, Richard Bradford, Carlos Riquelme, and Christopher Walken. Adapted by Nichols and David Ward. —T.R. (Metro Cinema; through July 7.)

The Moderns—The big subject of Alan Rudolph's new movie, a comic reverie on Americans in Paris in the twenties, may have got the better of him: the tough-guy romanticism is ridiculous, the jokes are self-conscious and mostly dumb, and Rudolph's eccentric vision seems not so much audacious as merely adolescent. The few sequences that show the director at his best are ones without dialogue: a boxing match between the down-and-out artist-hero (Keith Carradine) and a rich, evil art collector (John Lone), and a lovely montage in which Carradine forges a Cézanne, a Modigliani, and a Matisse. Despite these moments, and despite Carradine's finely shaded performance, the movie feels phony. With Linda Fiorentino, badly miscast as an elegant siren desired by both Carradine and Lone, and Geraldine Chaplin, Geneviève Bujold, Wallace Shawn, and Kevin J. O'Connor, as a callow, aphorizing Hemingway. Script by Rudolph and Jon Bradshaw.—T.R. (Plaza; through July 5.)

Moonstruck—A rose-tinted black comedy, with its own special lushness. Cher is devastatingly funny and sinuous and beautiful as a widowed bookkeeper who lives with her Italian-American family in a big old brownstone in Brooklyn. When the bookkeeper and her fiancé's brother, a baker (Nicolas Cage), start lusting for one another, a fairy-tale full moon lights up the movie. And when you see that the whole cast of family members are involved in libidinal confusions the opera-buffa structure can make you feel close to deliriously happy. Cage is a wonderful romantic clown: he can look stupefied while he smolders. And the director, Norman Jewison, working from John Patrick Shanley's script, stylizes the ethnic performances given by the husky-voiced Olympia Dukakis, the great, leering Julie Bovasso, Vincent Gardenia, Danny Aiello, John Mahoney, and Anita Gillette. The picture is slender, but it's an original: its mockery is a giddy homage to our desire for grand passion. (1/25/88) (Eastside Cinema.)

Pandora's Box (1928)—Louise Brooks left Hollywood in 1928, at the height of her career, and went to Germany for the role of a lifetime. G. W. Pabst had selected her to play Lulu in this film, adapted from the Wedekind plays "Erdgeist" and "Die Büchse der Pandora" (the same source material that Alban Berg used for his opera "Lulu"). Lulu is the sexually insatiable female, the archetype of voracious, destructive woman. She has no moral sense and no interests beyond sensuality; when a man is exhausted, she leaves him. The film is episodic; it's in an expressionist style, with rapid cutting and surprising kinds of almost violent visual tension, particularly in the first half. For sheer erotic dynamism, the backstage scenes on the opening night of a show Lulu is in have never been equalled; the later scenes, in Marseilles, are comparatively drab. Moving through the chiaroscuro, Louise Brooks, with her straight back and strong shoulders, seems to have her own form of sexuality—pre-conscious yet intuitively all-knowing. She's like a cool, beautiful, innocently deadly cat that people can't keep their hands off. With Fritz Kortner as Dr. Schön, Francis Lederer as his son, Alice Roberts as the lesbian Countess Geschwitz, and Gustav Diessl as Jack the Ripper. Adaptation by Ladislaus Vajda. Silent. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; July 10.)

The Presidio—This loud, lame thriller is set in San Francisco, in and around the Presidio Army base. An M.P. is killed when she stumbles onto a break-in at the Officers' Club, and the murder investigation turns into a clash of wills between a rigid lieutenant colonel (Sean Connery) and an impetuous young homicide cop (Mark Harmon). As if that weren't drama enough, Harmon, we learn, was once an M.P. under Connery's command (they hated each other), and in the course of the movie he falls in love with the lieutenant colonel's wild and adorable daughter (Meg Ryan). The screenwriter, Larry Ferguson, and the director, Peter Hyams, obviously think that it's been far too long since we've seen cars bouncing through the streets of San Francisco at high speeds, or a testy relationship between a by-the-book old-timer and a hotheaded younger man resolving itself in grudging admiration. They're wrong. Also with Jack Warden and Mark Blum.—T.R. (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy.)

Seconds (1966)—John Frankenheimer's macabre sci-fi thriller about a diabolical conspiratorial organization that arranges for people to be "reborn" via plastic surgery. There are some good ideas tucked away inside the scrambled unpleasantness; the best of them concerns a banker (John Randolph) who is vaguely dissatisfied with his life and arranges a Faustian bargain for a second chance (he comes back as Rock Hudson) but doesn't have any conception of a new life. Unfortunately, Hudson seems dull to us as well as to himself. With Salome Jens, Jeff Corey, Murray Hamilton, Wesley Addy, and Will Geer. (Thalia SoHo; July 7. . . . ¶ Biograph Cinema; July 10-11.)

Tampopo (1986)—Written and directed by Juzo Itami, this understated farce has its own brand of dippy enchantment. It's about noodles, pleasure, and the movies. The title, which is Japanese for "dandelion," is the name of a fortyish widow (Nobuko Miyamoto) who is trying to make a go of a run-down noodle shop on the outskirts of Tokyo. A courtly truck driver (Tsutomu Yamazaki), who wears a dark-brown cowboy hat straight across his brow, like the righteous hero of a solemn Western, makes it his mission to help her become a real noodle cook. The film crosscuts between the story of Tampopo and her cowboy samurai and the culinary-erotic adventures of a pair of lovers: a gangster in a white suit and his ready-for-everything cutie. These two demonstrate that eating and sex can be the same thing. The movie is constructed like a comic essay, with random frivolous touches, and much of it is shot in hot, bright color that suggests a neon fusion of urban night life and movie madness. The subtexts connect with viewers' funnybones at different times, and part of the fun of the movie is listening to the sudden eruptions of giggles—it's as if some kids were running around in the theatre tickling people. In Japanese. (6/1/87) (Bleecker St. Cinema.)

A Taxing Woman—The third film written and directed by Juzo Itami is his first dull one. It's a comedy about tax evasion, pitting a dishonest and very clever businessman (Tsutomu Yamazaki) against the awesome forces of Japan's national tax office, whose relentless spirit is most purely incarnated in a tiny, dogged female inspector named Mrs. Itakura (Nobuko Miyamoto). This sounds like fun, but, despite some clever notions and a handful of inventive scenes, the movie feels tentative, not fully worked out; it's as if Itami got bogged down in research and forgot about the jokes. For whatever reason, "A Taxing Woman" is much more conventional than the director's previous films, "The Funeral" and "Tampopo" (see above). In Japanese.—T.R. (Lincoln Plaza. . . . Bleecker St. Cinema; starting July 8.)

The Ten Commandments (1956)—Charlton Heston is the highly athletic Moses; Anne Baxter is the kittenish princess who loves him; Judith Anderson is the sinister slave who knows the secret of his Jewish birth; Cedric Hardwicke is the likable old Pharaoh; Yul Brynner is the prince who beats Moses to the Egyptian throne; Edward G. Robinson is the traitor to the Jews; Debra Paget is the young slave old Robinson has got his eyes on. Stir them all together, throw in stone tablets and a whopping big Golden Calf, part the Red Sea, and you've got Cecil B. De Mille's epic—3 hours and 38 minutes of it. As old-fashioned hokum, it's palatable and rather tasty. (Biograph Cinema; July 12-13.)

To Be or Not to Be (1942)—Some people have great affection for this anti-Nazi comedy-melodrama, with its knockabout seriousness. The stars are Carole Lombard and Jack Benny, bizarrely cast as a famous Polish actress and her actor husband; the plot involves actors disguising themselves as Nazis in order to foil the Nazis. Ernst Lubitsch, who directed, starts off on the wrong foot and never gets his balance; the performers yowl their lines, and the burlesque of the Nazis, who cower before their superior officers, is more crudely gleeful than funny. With Robert Stack, Lionel Atwill, Stanley Ridges, Felix Bressart, and Tom Dugan (as Hitler). It was Lombard's last film; two weeks after completing it, she was killed in a plane crash while on a tour to sell defense bonds. (Thalia SoHo; July 12.)

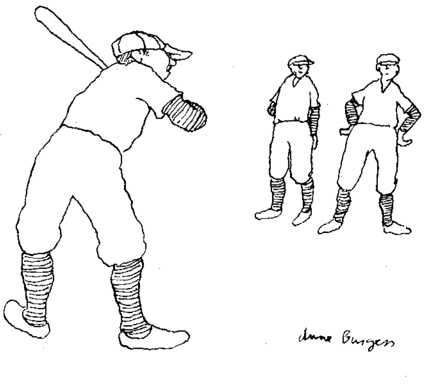
Trash (1970)—Absurdist porno-comedy about an impotent junkie (Joe Dallesandro) who drags himself around while various women try to arouse him. His sort-of-wife is played by a goofy female impersonator, Holly Woodlawn, whose intensity amidst the general dejection is crazily—and entertainingly—incongruous. The picture is steeped in a sense of grotesque parody, though most of the time it's as enervated and limp as its hero. This Andy Warhol production was directed by Paul Morrissey, who lingers over needles going into flesh and puts a nimbus around the messiest head of hair. With Jane Forth and Michael Sklar. (Cinema Village; July 8-9.)

The Unbearable Lightness of Being—Directed by Philip Kaufman, this adaptation of Milan Kundera's novel is touching in sophisticated ways that you don't expect from an American director. A prankish sex comedy, it treats modern political events with a delicate—yet almost sly—sense of tragedy. It's the way the variations of jealousy and erotic attraction are played out by the three principal actors—an Englishman (Daniel Day-Lewis), a Swedish woman (Lena Olin), and a Frenchwoman (Juliette Binoche), all playing Czechs—that gives the movie its wonderfully unresolved texture. The story begins in Prague in 1968, during the period of freedom of expression and artistic flowering known as "socialism with a human face." Day-Lewis's Tomas is a hedonist, a womanizer, and an eminent young brain surgeon; Olin's Sabina, a painter who is his longtime sex partner, and Binoche's Tereza, whom he marries, represent the two poles of his life—lightness and weight. Kaufman has an exuberant temperament, and the spirit of the film is younger and looser than that of the book; a short two hours and fifty-three minutes, the picture has a whirling beauty. (2/8/88) (68th St. Playhouse. . . . ¶ Bleecker St. Cinema, and Olympia; through July 7.)

White Mischief—At first, Michael Radford's film about upper-class English settlers in Kenya in the nineteen-forties seems bracingly sardonic: there isn't a hint of the sneaky romanticism and nostalgia for Empire that colonial dramas so frequently succumb to. As one aristocratic viper after another is introduced, and each member of the large and familiar cast (Greta Scacchi, Charles Dance, Joss Ackland, Sarah Miles, John Hurt, Trevor Howard, Geraldine Chaplin) makes his distinctively peculiar entrance, the movie promises to be wicked fun. Amazingly, though, as the action gets nastier the picture gets duller. The screenplay, by Radford and Jonathan Gems, is based on the real-life murder of Josslyn Hay, Earl of Errol (Dance), a colonial Casanova who conducted a flagrant affair with young Lady Diana Broughton (Scacchi), to which their jaded social set reacted with a mixture of amusement and jealousy. As the movie concentrates more and more on the unsavory triangle of Errol, Diana, and her creepy middle-aged husband (Ackland), we begin to get the uneasy feeling that the director has lost track of his own intentions. For all the melodramatic complications, the characters remain static, as if they'd been frozen in place after their initial scenes.—T.R. (Carnegie Hall Cinema. . . . ¶ Art Greenwich Twin; through July 7.)

Who Framed Roger Rabbit—With Bob Hoskins and Christopher Lloyd, directed by Robert Zemeckis. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Gramercy, Coronet, Ziegfeld, and Columbia Cinema.)

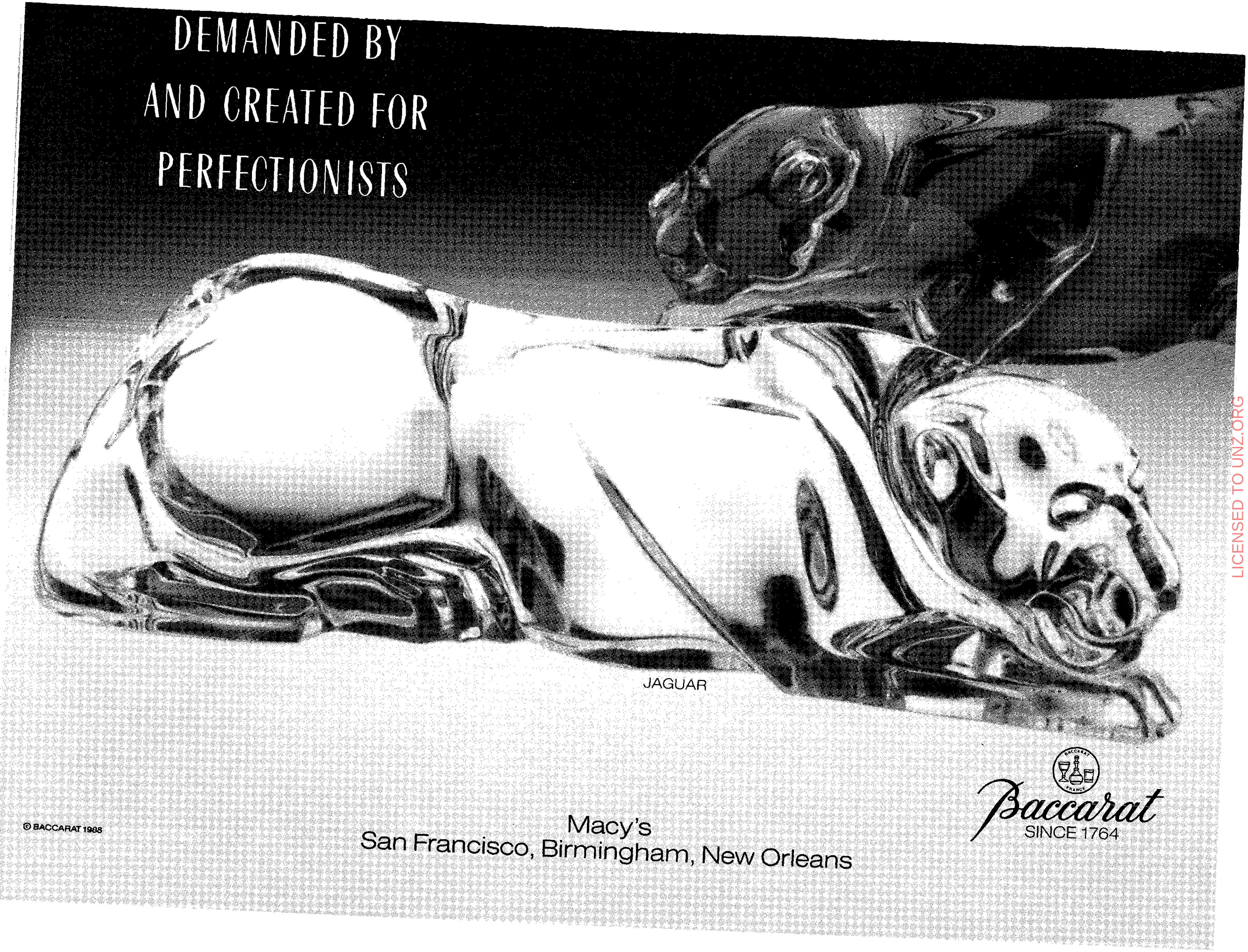
Willow—The evil sorceress Queen Bavmorda (Jean Marsh) is killing all the newborn babies in the Daikini domain, because of a prophecy that an infant born with a special mark will bring about her downfall. Placed on a raft of rushes, the savior baby girl drifts downriver into the land of a peaceful, elflike people, the Nelwyns. A young Nelwyn farmer, Willow (Warwick Davis), tries to protect her, and eventually, with the help of an outlaw Daikini swordsman (Val Kilmer) and a rebel Daikini (Gavan O'Herlihy), Willow storms the evil queen's black castle. This tale involves trolls, vicious black boars, nine-inch-tall men called Brownies, platinum-wigged Tinker Bells, a two-headed dragon, and some four hundred special-effects shots. Before it's over, you feel as if you'd fallen into a pile of mixed metaphors. Produced by George Lucas, who also wrote the story, the movie seems to be one stale idea after another. The director, Ron Howard, shows his gentle talent only in his handling of the three-foot-four-inch Willow, whose sweet-faced humility could make parts of the movie appealing to kids. With Billy Barty—triumphant as usual—as the High Aldwin of the Nelwyns. (5/30/88) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews Tower East, Guild, and Loews Paramount.)



Wings of Desire ("Der Himmel über Berlin")—The director, Wim Wenders, who wrote the script with the collaboration of Peter Handke, has a theme: in an approximation of Rilke's words, "Joy has gone astray." We're told that "when the child was a child," stories held together. Now all we have is fragmentation, entropy. Two angels—Damiel (Bruno Ganz) and Cassiel (Otto Sander)—hover over the bleak, divided city and move among the forlorn Berliners, listening to what's in their minds: listening to the questions about existence that these people ask themselves. Our overhearing what the angels hear—the thoughts chanted on the track, all in even, quiet tones, as grayed out as the sunless skies—works on us like a tranquillizer. Eventually, Damiel falls in love with a beautiful French aerialist (Solveig Dommartin), and gives up his wings. With Peter Falk, who brings some funky warmth to the role of an American movie star, and Curt Bois as a sad-faced old man called Homer. The cinematography (tinted black-and-white, and color) is by Henri Alekan. This Franco-German production is in English, French, and German. (5/30/88) (Cinema Studio.)

The Woman in the Window (1944)—One of the best of Fritz Lang's American movies—a thriller with the logic and plausibility of a nightmare. Lang's technique is so sure and so seductive that the viewer completely identifies with the safe, serene protagonist (Edward G. Robinson), an associate professor of psychology in a New York City college, and shares his shock and fear when he's caught in a trap. The professor is interested in the relation of motive to homicide—an interest that's purely a matter of intellectual curiosity. Then, when his wife and child are out of town, he visits a woman's apartment; her lover comes in and unexpectedly attacks him, and he kills the intruder with a pair of scissors. Joan Bennett is the woman in the case, Dan Duryea is a blackmailer, and Raymond Massey is an assistant district attorney. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; July 7.)

A World Apart—Set in 1963, it's about a thirteen-year-old girl (Jodhi May) who lives a well-ordered, ruling-class life in a fine home in suburban Johannesburg until her father (Jeroen Krabbé), who's a Communist, flees the country in the middle of the night to escape arrest, and her mother (Barbara Hershey), the editor of a small anti-apartheid newspaper, is "detained" for ninety days, and then another ninety days. Based on a semi-autobiographical script by Shawn Slovo, the daughter of the journalist Ruth First and Joe Slovo, the leader of the banned South African Communist Party, the movie deals with the girl's feeling confused and resentful—the fight against apartheid is also her competitor. In prison or out, her mother is not all there for her. The theme of the movie is the conflict between fighting injustice and what we owe to our families—or, more poignantly, a young girl's pain at the loss of her mother and father, though she knows the reason for it. Shot in Zimbabwe, this remarkable first feature directed by the noted cinematographer Chris Menges has a visual snap to it. It's luminous yet very informal. And though, toward the end, it falls into chanting slogans, it has a radiant intelligence. The cast includes Linda Mvusi, who shared the best-actress award at Cannes with May and Hershey, and Tim Roth, Yvonne Bryceland, Albee Lesotho, David Suchet, and Nadine Chalmers. (6/13/88) (Cinema I.)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THE NEW YORKER

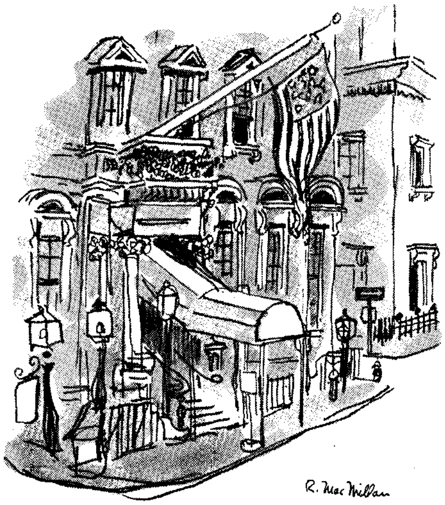
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

SUMMER makes us restless—especially these clear, blue postcard days when the Chrysler Building rises in the Forty-third Street canyon like a finger beckoning east toward Europe. But it isn't Europe we're restless for. There's a cigarette ad we see in the subway showing a dazzling white terrace and a beautiful blue sea that we take to be the Aegean, and we can imagine draping ourself and our skinny red swimsuit across a wicker chair in the sunshine of Greece and sipping a glass of retsina, and then we imagine sitting and looking across the blue and feeling restless. So Europe isn't the answer for this, any more than cigarette smoking would be. It's simply the old summer restlessness, which goes back to school days when we sat trapped in the classroom as innocent June lay nearby and murmured in the sunshine in the far-far-left margin of the English exam and its stupefying questions about Richard Cory and why he shot himself. He just did, that's all, and who can say why? The world is full of sadness. We don't feel like talking about it now.

Restlessness makes us think about taking a white 1960 Cadillac convertible that we don't have and driving eighty-five miles an hour across the George Washington Bridge and into the Pocono Mountains with a can of Schlitz in one hand, the top down, and the radio playing crazy songs, and, when we come to the most beautiful stretch of blue-green forest, throwing the beer can into the trees. We have never dropped any trash anywhere —not on purpose—out of respect for others and also because we were afraid that if we did Thoreau would appear and pick up our jujube wrapper and put it in his pocket and say, his large, sad eyes meeting ours, "Why should we be in such desperate haste to succeed, and in such desperate enterprises?" We don't know the answer to that one, either.

Restlessness leads us over to the office window, where there is nothing new to look at, and that makes us restless to find a new window. We take the long walk to the end of the hall, drink a drink of water, and come back, hoping the exercise will shake down this looseness and jumpiness, and we sit again. But on one long walk last Monday we turned right and rode the elevator down to the ground and hit the street. We walked west toward the river and angled south and got our car out of storage. It runs pretty well, considering that we haven't driven it more than ten miles in the past three months. We aimed it toward the West Side Highway and up the Taconic State Parkway with the radio on. We have a license to drive, and on Monday we just felt like using it. Heading up the graceful old Parkway, its progression of sensuous turns and dips shaped in an era when driving was considered romantic and fun, like dancing, we were feeling considerably calmer when the Mills Brothers came over the air singing "Gentle on My Mind." In a bright tempo, their inimitable honeytone voices sang, "It's knowing that your door is always open and your path is free to walk that makes me tend to leave my sleeping bag rolled up and stashed behind your couch." Except for the lyrics, it sounded like a swing standard from 1936.



Thinking of the four stately black gentlemen in their shiny show suits, their hair slicked back with pomade, swaying and snapping their fingers, their steady smiles and smooth voices, we had trouble imagining that any of the Mills Brothers had ever owned a sleeping bag, let alone stashed it behind somebody's couch. Their lives always appeared to be sedentary and committed lives, devoted to entertaining us. When they sang on the Perry Como show, they never struck us as the least bit restless or dissatisfied, any more than Perry himself did. So it was revealing to hear them sing about not being "shackled by forgotten words and bonds and the ink stains that have dried upon some line" and the verse about wandering across the wheat fields and junk yards and highways and the train yards and the back roads. They made restlessness sound like a song they had to sing in order to have the album seem contemporary enough to satisfy their record producer. Hunkering in a train yard feeling free and waiting for a freight to come along was not part of the Mills Brothers' mystery of life, which had little to do with highways, either, and much to do with standing in a close semicircle and making pure four-part harmony. Same here, we thought. Restlessness doesn't suit us, either. We like to be squeezed a little, like a middle Mills, and hear our voice gently throbbing and bending in long, tender parallels with the others, not out here on a limb alone. An hour's run up the Taconic seemed to settle us down pretty well, and we turned around and came back to the city.

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Chinese Fossils

HOW our view of evolution has changed in the last decades! Continents, which were once considered stable places, zoom about in geological time; the plants and animals on them develop in related groups called clades; and there is no longer such a thing as a reptile—just lizards, crocodilians, turtles, and dinosaurs. "Reptile" is now considered too general a word to have any meaning. Besides, some dinosaurs may have been warm-blooded. Nor are dinosaurs extinct. A great many of them have taken wing and are called birds. What makes a dinosaur a dinosaur is, in part, its hips and legs. Unlike the legs of crocodilians, lizards, and turtles, which extend laterally from the pelvis, dinosaurs' legs drop straight from the hip. So do birds' legs.

We learned all this recently in an upstairs conference room at the American Museum of Natural History, where two specialists in vertebrate paleontology, Eugene Gaffney and Lowell Dingus, were unpacking crates full of dinosaur bones and other fossils from China; the crates were delicately wrought, and they smelled of aromatic wood shavings that were used as packing material. The ancient Chinese animals—fifty-one of them, weighing forty tons—would join twenty-two of their American relatives for an exhibition entitled "From the Land of Dragons," to open on July 22nd. Dr. Gaffney, a white-haired, white-mustached man of about forty-five, told us that the world's two largest known deposits of dinosaurs and other ancient animals are in the Canadian and American Rockies and in the Gobi Desert, in China. The great era of dinosaur digging in the Rockies, when the American Museum formed the basis of its collection, was in the early part of this century. In China, where for millennia dinosaur bones were ground up to make love potions, little serious paleontology was done until after the end of the Cultural Revolution, during which several of that country's few paleontologists had been out of work. Since 1970, however, the Chinese paleontologists—many of whom have studied at the American Museum in the last two decades—have been making up for lost time.

The purpose of the exhibition is not just to show Chinese fossils, Dr. Dingus said, but to use the wealth of specimens from China to throw light on the new theories being developed in the West. "The Chinese, who are as enthusiastic about the exhibition as we are, want to be recognized—to show that in paleontology they are competitive with the rest of the world, and perhaps even surpass us," Dr. Gaffney said. He added that the Chinese and American paleontologists are concerned not with such spectacular questions as whether the dinosaurs were rendered extinct by the impact of a giant asteroid sixty-five million years ago—questions that are essentially speculative, and unprovable by today's techniques—but with relationships and classification, which are more easily testable.

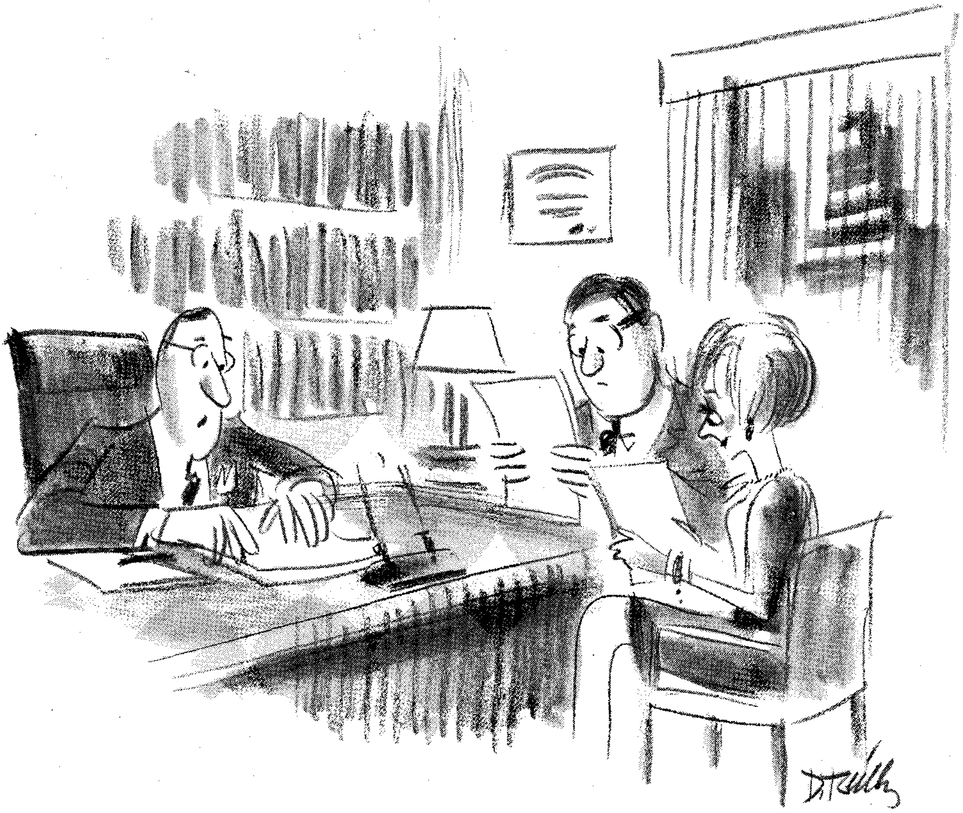
Dr. Dingus, a slender, black-haired man in his late thirties, is the exhibition coördinator. He showed us a chart he was preparing which illustrated the theories developed over the last fifteen years about dinosaur evolution as they apply to the Chinese and American creatures in the exhibit. It was a diagram that looked like a staircase, or, rather, like two staircases, ascending outward from a point at the bottom center—the time, three hundred million years ago, when the synapsids, which eventually became mammals, split off from the sauropsids, which eventually became dinosaurs and birds. The staircase leading to dinosaurs and birds ascended from turtles through lizards and crocodilians to pterodactyls. The staircase leading to mammals began with a succession of mammal ancestors (direct or collateral) that resembled dinosaurs but lacked their lithe hips—the group included dicynodonts, traversodonts, and tritylodonts—and continued with the more obviously mammalian monotremes, marsupials, and rodents. Each step on each staircase represented some new basic development (vertically articulated hips and legs, for instance, or placental birth), and from the top of each step sprouted whole trees of interrelated groups—clades—which embodied that step and the preceding ones. Dr. Dingus said that the chart, which he called a cladogram, showed a more subtle gradation of evolution than conventional diagrams: it reduced the importance of dinosaurs, raised that of turtles, crocodilians, and such, and provided mammals with a separate lineage going back to an ancestor (as yet undiscovered) that they shared with dinosaurs and birds.

Dr. Gaffney told us he had gone to Peking to help select the dinosaurs, and had picked them with an eye to the points he wanted to make. One major Chinese find, he said, was a lufengosaurus, a twenty-foot-long early relative of the brontosaurus. It was still in its crate downstairs, but a picture of it looked like an overgrown newt. Gaffney said that the fossil was an example of how the Chinese discoveries filled gaps in paleontology—it's the only known lufengosaurus. Another significant fossil is a lystrosaurus, a goat-size dicynodont dating from about two hundred and twenty-five million years ago, which is one of the earliest known examples of the mammalian line. Dicynodonts—there are several in the exhibit, ranging from lamb size to ox size—had tusks and no other teeth, and had a stolid, wide-hipped stance, like a bulldog's. They may have moved in herds, for nine of them are fossilized in a single slab of Chinese rock. Dicynodonts from all over the world are similar, because they lived at a time when there were no separate continents.

Dr. Dingus and Dr. Gaffney uncrated fossil after fossil. In one crate they found the fifteen-pound skull of an ancient Chinese turtle with a trumpetlike snout; in another they turned up the back part of the skull of a traversodont—a stealthy-looking creature one step closer to mankind than the dicynodonts. For the most part, the Chinese fossils were yellow ochre or burnt umber—the colors, we suspected, of the Gobi Desert.

As we were leaving, we asked Dr. Gaffney if we had got it right about the birds.

He nodded, and said as he shook our hand, "The next time you have chicken for lunch, remember that you're eating a dinosaur."



"And the last paragraph of the prenuptial agreement stipulates that, no matter what hell may break loose later, neither party will go and blab about it on 'Donahue.'"

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Irma Thomas

THE other night, we went to the Lone Star Café to hear the rhythm-and-blues singer Irma Thomas, who's known to her admirers as "the soul queen of New Orleans." She ran onstage, clutching a cordless microphone, and sang such old hits as "I Done Got Over It" and "You Can Have My Husband (But Please Don't Mess with My Man)," and then she broke into a curious prancing step and wagged a white handkerchief in the air. She said this was a dance called the Second Line, and told the audience, "Now, we do the Second Line down South whenever there's something to celebrate. And, as you know, in Louisiana we celebrate everything. We celebrate frogs, roaches, mosquitoes, alligators, red beans and rice, okra, tomatoes, divorces, separations, and when your pregnancy test comes back negative. All you have to do is wave your arms in the air and put your backfield in motion. Now, don't get upset if you can't get your backfield in motion the way you want to. It's not how well you do it but the spirit that you do it in."

Ms. Thomas has frizzy hair and an electric smile, and she was wearing a white silk pants suit, a wide rhinestone belt, and high, high heels. Her seven musicians, the Professionals, stood behind her in a doo-wop line, wearing brown slacks, brown tuxedo vests, and white dress shirts open at the throat. "Now, get on up," Ms. Thomas coaxed the crowd. "There's a whole world sittin' down glued to a chair." She broke into "Iko Iko," a New Orleans anthem notable chiefly for a refrain that is mostly in an ersatz Indian tongue laced with pidgin French.

The crowd at the Lone Star danced and sang along. Everybody seemed to know all the lyrics to the songs. Some people pelted her with requests. Others took cocktail napkins from the bar, shook them loose, and waved them above their heads. For a while, that was all we could see—a roomful of white napkins waving in the dark.

Between sets, we visited Ms. Thomas in her dressing room, a Spartan cellar with cracked concrete floors, liquor bottles locked up in a chicken-wire safe, and an old gunmetal desk. She'd changed into a pair of terry-cloth slippers and opened a Coke and was sitting in a vinyl chair in front of a big TV set with the sound off. We took a seat on top of a small electric fan (it was that or the floor) and asked her how she started singing.

"Honey, my story sounds like a black version of the Loretta Lynn story," she said wearily. "I mean, she had a bunch of kids and she worked and she struggled, and so did I. We did what we had to do. I been singing ever since I knew there was such a word as 'sing.' It was a gift from God. I was an only child, and I sang to keep myself company. I sang my first gig in 1958, when I was seventeen. It was in Waveland, Mississippi, in a hall that some guys had rented. They gave the band and me what they call the door, which turned out to be two dollars. We used it to put gas in the car for the drive back to New Orleans. By 1961, I was on my third record and my fourth baby. I started touring, because my record was doing O.K. and I needed to get away to make some money. My mama used to keep the kids for me, until I got a babysitter. We'd all go together in one station wagon—musicians, singers, all the equipment, and our luggage. We travelled mostly to Florida, Alabama, and Georgia, playing these little clubs. All black clubs."

A tall, graceful man appeared in the dressing-room doorway. He wore a white straw hat and a wristwatch crusted with diamonds. "Come on up, sign one more album," he said. The man turned out to be Emile Jackson, Ms. Thomas's husband and manager. He'd been upstairs selling an armload of Irma Thomas records to audience members during the break.

"One more album," she repeated, zombie-fashion, and groped in her pocket for a pen. Stepping back into her high heels, she disappeared up the stairs. Ten minutes later, she was back, looking relieved to be able to sink down into the chair again.

"I sell the records at performances as often as I can, because I feel that many people don't know about them," Ms. Thomas explained. "You see, I'm practical. There was a long time when I didn't go anywhere, because it didn't pay anything. These days, I'm doing a lot of touring, thank God. But I've always had to hold other jobs. During my career, I've been a waitress in two places. When disco took over, in the seventies, my kind of music wasn't popular, so I moved to Los Angeles and took a job at Montgomery Ward, selling lingerie. Later, the company moved me to automotive, and I sold automobile parts. I was good at it, too. In '76, I started going back to New Orleans to do engagements, and it came to the point where I was spending more time there than in California with my children. So I moved back. Course, I met Emile that way. I met him at Mason's Las Vegas Strip, which was a whole block of clubs, all connected to one another, in a black neighborhood in the heart of New Orleans. The buildings are still around, but it's pretty much closed up now. One evening, I went to the V.I.P. Lounge to say hello to some musician friends. And the way I met Emile was he walked up to me and told me I had a ravel on the back of my dress. About a year after we were married, I made him my manager. I wasn't happy with the one I had. So I explained to Emile what a manager's supposed to do. I figured he would be the best judge of whether I wanted to do something or didn't want to do it. And I figured he'd have my financial interests at heart, because they'd be his financial interests, too."

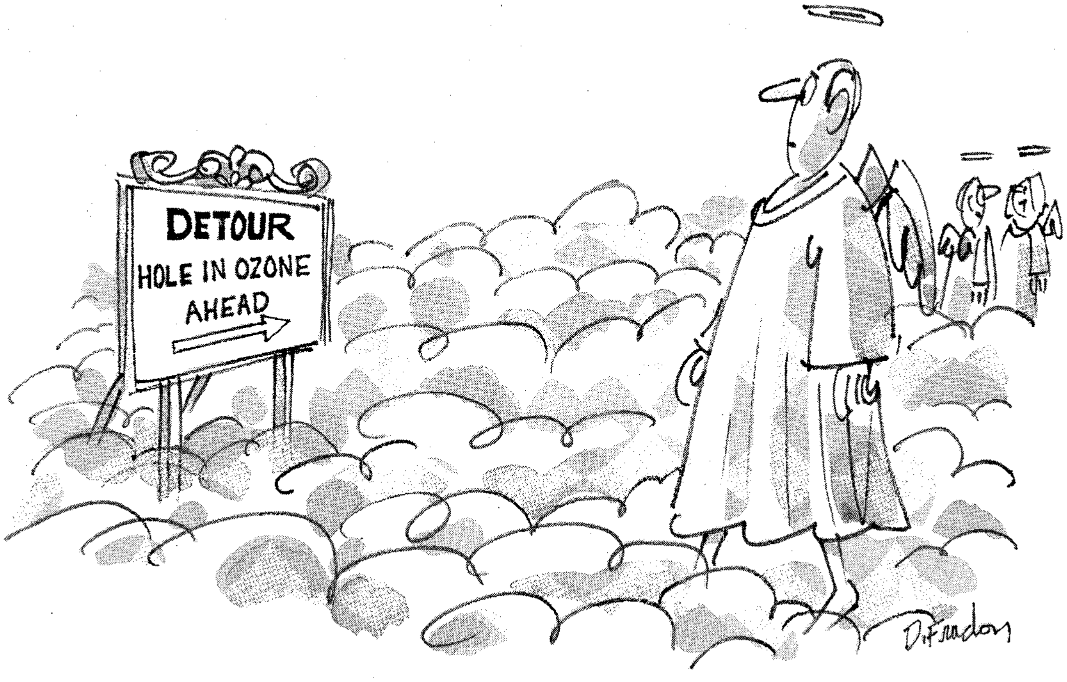
Before we went back upstairs, we asked Ms. Thomas if she ever got tired of singing her hits from the early sixties—songs she's been singing at every performance for nearly thirty years.

"Course not," she said. "They're good songs. I've lived with 'em all these years, and they've fed me all these years. Besides, the people don't want me to change. They always ask for the same songs. In the middle stages of my career, I played a lot of fraternity and sorority parties at Southern colleges. I created a situation where people met their husbands or their wives. So this is nostalgia for them. I guess some artists change all the time because they want to stay on top. Well, I've never been on top, so what difference does it make? And I wouldn't change if I was. I like me the way I am. Like tonight, I'm just enjoying the response I'm getting from an audience I've never played to before. I'm dog-tired, but if that audience is up I won't feel tired when I have to go back out there."

Hands

BERNIE KORMAN is a New York cabdriver who for the past thirty years has been making charcoal sketches of famous people's hands. He has done a lot of other things, too. He won a car on "The $128,000 Question," because he knows a lot about Michelangelo. (He's also an expert on Rodin, Donatello, and El Greco.) He has written a book entitled "Hands—The Power of Hand Awareness." He appeared on Betty Furness's "At Your Beck and Call" TV show some years back. He's been on radio as a kind of "cabdriver on the scene." And currently he has an exhibition of his sculptures, called "Remembrance of the Holocaust," at the Jewish Community House of Bensonhurst. But it's hands that interest him most.

Korman, who has a round face and eyes that are always squinting, will tell you that he is passionate about hands because they challenge him. "To render hands in such a way that they are artistically and anatomically correct, and to portray the human hand as an extension of the human personality, as a portrait painter depicts the human face, is, aesthetically speaking, the most rewarding study an artist can undertake," he says. "Man's creativity and intelligence, after all, start with the hand. There is a tremendous latitude of ex-

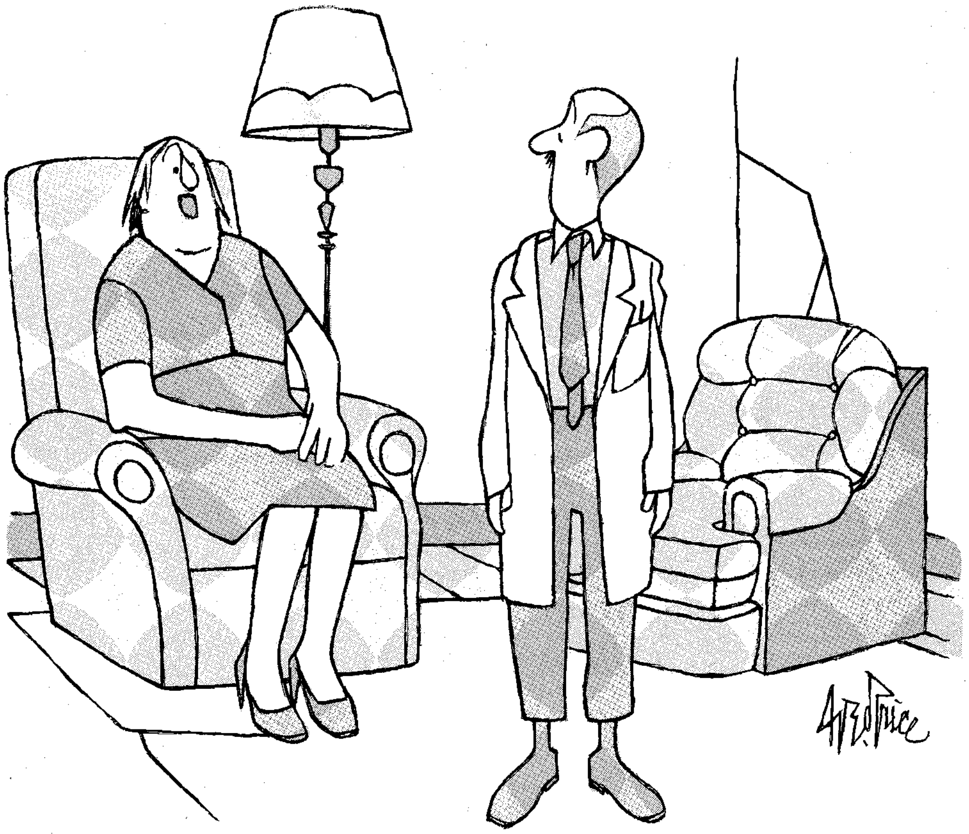


pression and emotion in hands. If you can capture that—well, then you've done something."

Sometime in 1958 or 1959, Korman was waiting for a fare in front of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and doing what he always did when he had some spare time: sketching the human hand. A woman passenger got into the cab, saw the sketch, and said, "That is very expressive. Can I buy it from you?" Korman, who gets uncomfortable when art and money are mixed (today he charges a nominal fee for a drawing), insisted that she take it for nothing. The woman wrote down his address. Weeks later, he got the sketch back in the mail with a note from an appraiser friend of the woman's saying that it was indeed expressive, and that he should concentrate on drawing hands.

Great moments repeat themselves. A few months later, the same thing happened. "I was putting some finishing touches on a few veins at a red light," Korman says, "and a woman passenger looked over my shoulder and said, 'That is very expressive.' She turned out to be a dealer in fine art. She urged me to put together a body of work which would explore the whole range of hand emotion. I said I would, and I already knew what I would call it—'Expressions Through Hands.' " Before long, the completed "Expressions" was shown in the lobby of the First Federal Savings & Loan near Radio City Music Hall. And then Robert Young got Korman started on Polaroids.

"I was taking Robert Young to the Plaza, and he noticed my sketchbook," Korman said not long ago. "He thought it would be a good idea if I did his hands—you know, 'The Expressive Hands of the Actor' kind of thing. We made tentative arrangements to meet the next day, but he never showed up. I swore that from that day on I'd keep a Polaroid camera around to capture famous hands right away." Korman has since sketched the hands of several hundred famous people, among them Melvyn Douglas (his first customer), Leonard Bernstein, Joan Bennett, and Mickey Mantle. Here's how he goes about it: A famous person gets in his cab ("I don't look for them, they look for me. They stick their hands out and I come along"), and he strikes up a conversation. If the famous person is receptive, Korman steers the conversation toward hands. That isn't difficult, because he has plastered the inside of his cab with his sketches. Donna Karan caught on right away. But not all celebrity passengers take the hint. When Korman asked Ric Ocasek, the former lead singer of the Cars, what he did for a living, Ocasek replied, "Well, I'm kind of a rock star." Korman said, "Well, I do a certain thing for rock stars that no one else can do." Ocasek asked him what it was. A few moments later, Korman got the camera out.



"I've noticed you've taken to wearing a lab coat lately. May I ask the reason why?"

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According to Korman, both Karan and Ocasek have "psychic-conic" hands; that is, the fingertips are finely tapered, whereas the fingers are conical at the base. Artistic people usually have psychic-conic hands, he says, and less creative people tend to have one of the five other types of hands. They are the square hand ("characterized, obviously, by the shape"); the elementary ("a crude hand, whose fingers are sometimes deformed: those individuals who possess the elementary are not high in intellect"); the mixed ("a hand with a combination of fat and skinny fingers"); the philosophical ("all philosophical hands have long, skinny fingers, a sure sign that their possessors are on Cloud Nine"); and the criminal ("the criminal hand shows signs of brutality: heaviness of flesh, sagging musculature, and extensive veins, like mine").

Korman keeps a scrapbook in which the Polaroids of his subjects are neatly arranged with appropriate titles, such as "The Expressive Hands of Princess Grace," "The Hands of the Great Comedian Henny Youngman," "The Hands of Great Dancer Arthur Murray," and "The Good Hands of Football Star Kyle Rote." Recently, while pointing out some of his personal favorites in the scrapbook (Arthur Rubinstein, whose little fingers look almost as long as his ring fingers, ranks pretty high), Korman observed, "The hand is the prime differentiation between man and animal. If it weren't for the opposable thumb, we would all be living in caves."

SPOKANE

I KNOW nothing about Spokane. Where I live, no one does. I have a friend, though, Jo, who is supposed to have been there, yet I wonder: it was only mentioned between us three times. But sometimes you just need a word for something; it doesn't matter what it really means.

The first time, he called me up. He was still travelling round the world then; we had crawled through the London traffic to drop him at Heathrow six months before, and a while back there had been a postcard from Manila. I had some people round to dinner that evening: Claire, Mandy, and David—they all knew him. The phone went about nine.

"This is Jo, man." His voice was wide and satisfied. "I have to tell you! Things have been like this for *two months* already, and now—I've realized that they have! I just want to tell my best friend. Do you want to hear?"

I couldn't ask him to ring later; I was hoping everyone back in the dining room was starting without me.

Jo had begun again anyway. "I've met someone, Brian. I *have* met someone!" There was a silence. "Two people just decide to use each other, Brian—you know, there might be such a case? They kind of agree about it perfectly, without saying anything at all? I mean I know *now*, now I've met her. You want the other *although* they're other. They don't become part of you. In fact, you become more and more convinced of how separate they are: of how their body and their mind stop before yours begin. You want them for that. Pure need, yours and theirs, draining each other's. I've never been able to be so honest with someone—without having to say so. People should use each other more, Brian. Don't wait for *love*." A silence again. "I'm telling you all this—I can't say it to her. I can't understand how we're so certain about it without saying a word, and we still haven't . . ."

The swelling and waning I'd become aware of in his words—it might have been the line. He sounded drunk.

"Where are you, Jo?"

"Where am I? Never mind where I am." He laughed. "I'm just trying to tell you how away from everything we are. I don't love her, I think. Just . . . colluding. *Purely* cynical, man—how can I say? No idea where I am." A pause. "Spokane."

I didn't know. "What do you mean, 'Spokane'? Is that where you are?" Had he owned up or made it up? "What's Spokane?"

"Spokane's in America," said Jo, as if I had asked an entirely unrelated question. "Northwest America. There's nothing to tell, I realize as I'm telling you all this. It simply . . . is! I'll just stay here and shut up." He said he had to be back in England by Christmas, when his ticket expired—this was August—and now that he'd spent a fortune telling me something I didn't want to know, he'd better go. But we'd only been talking a minute or two and I'd never said a thing.

"That was Jo!" I said back in the dining room. "He's in America. In Spokane. He's met this girl, but he doesn't love her—but he doesn't need to. He just needs her. And he can't speak to her anyway."

"How do you spell that?" said Claire. "Like Cannes? Spocannes?" She considered a moment. "It'll be some sun-kissed resort," she said. "Beach in Florida. Topless bathing . . . piña coladas . . . sunstroke. . . . He's met some blond bimbo, Brian."

"He said it was northwest," I said.

"That's sort of, Montana, up around there?" said David. "I read some stories about there." He drummed his fingers. "Not Harrison Ford. . . . Trailer parks. Gas stations in the middle of nowhere. Airbases. Thousands of miles of prairie, bare bulbs, that sort of thing. Nothing else to do."

" 'Witness,' " said Mandy. "That was Harrison Ford. The strict religious community? That bit where they're dancing to Sam Cooke in the cowshed? No wonder he can't tell her."

"He sounded like he'd had too much to drink," I said.

"The bourbon," said David. "The isolation. That was Pennsylvania," he said to Mandy. "That's the East Coast. Other side."

Then Mandy wondered about "Paris, Texas," the vacant building lot and the conversation through the one-way glass, so I went and got the atlas.

"There we are," she said, dropping her finger on the map. "Spokane. Next to Seattle. That's it. Spo-

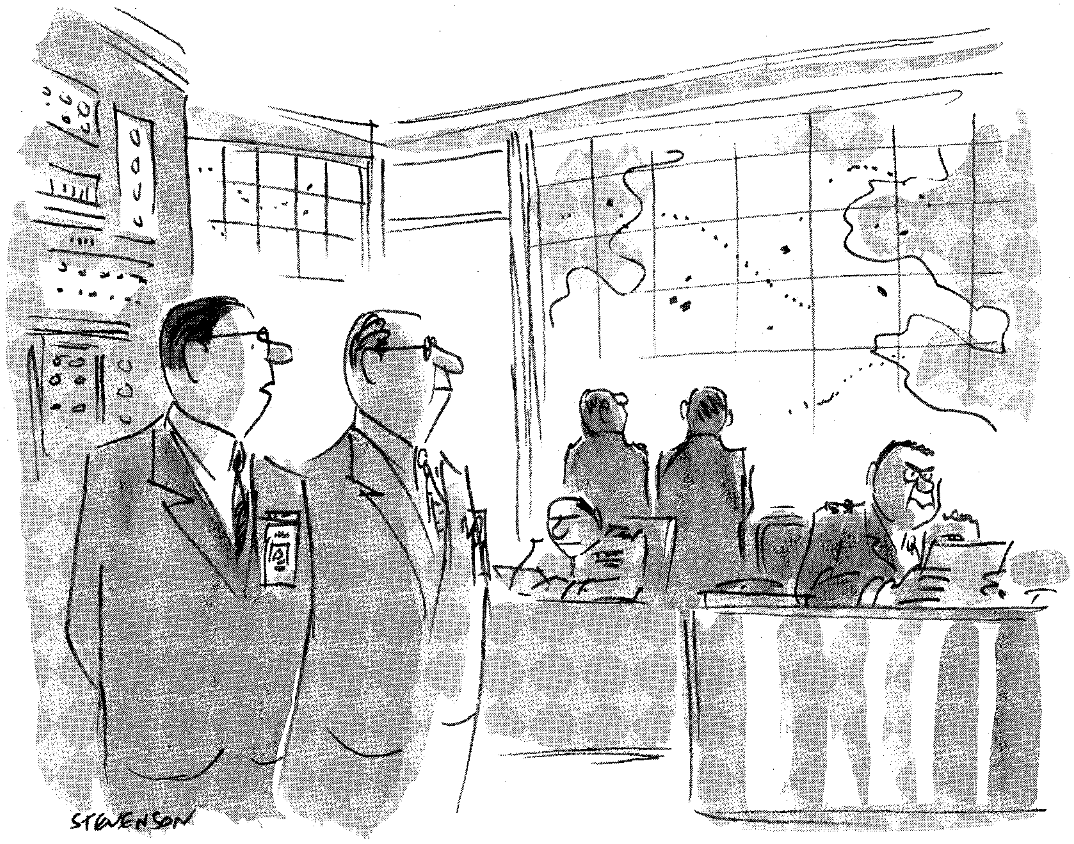
kane . . . cocaine . . . Novocain—he's doing drugs, Claire told you."

"It's pronounced *Spukkann*," I said. "That's how Jo said it. This must be it." I fetched the phone pad from the kitchen and wrote it down. We all had a look at it there. *Spokane.*

Then Claire said, "Citizen Spokane," and David, "Who's Rosebud?," and I realized Jo hadn't even told me the woman's name.

The next day I went to the library and looked up Spokane in a Fodor's. Founded in the eighteen-seventies; a hundred and fifty-five thousand people. Contending with Tacoma as Washington State's second-largest city, depending on whether you included or excluded the suburban sprawl. Green parks. A spectacular shopping mall. The venue for a World's Fair. What did all this have to do with anything? *Spukkann:* it sounded like *spick-and-span* squeezed together too much.

But what else was there—what else to get a handle on it all? Jo's in Spokane, I could say to myself. He's not in love, he's in Spokane. He's renouncing public life: he's gone into Spokane. He can't talk to her at all (did she even speak English?)—they can only communicate *in Spokane.*



"General Torrentine is for when we want something a bit more spontaneous than a measured response."

• •

A FORTNIGHT after he called, Jo was suddenly back in England. I phoned him when I heard and asked him why he'd come back so early.

"Yeah. Oh, travel fatigue. Just hits you one day. What are you doing tonight? I only got in yesterday."

Then Mandy came by, and I told her. She flicked back through my phone pad, and regarded the page. "Spo*kane*, right? Like ar*cane*? No, wait—I got it wrong last time. *Spo*kane." It looked like it sounded that way.

You expect places to mark people, to come back with them to visit us, and often they do. Florida tans arms, bleaches the hair; India returns in the gut, pinches the skin over the cheekbones. However far Jo had been, it was only an abrupt plane ride back—less than a day's transition. I reckoned he would look like he'd been somewhere.

But when I picked him up he looked the same as when he'd gone away. It was as if I had seen him the previous week, or as though he had slipped into the aircraft toilet on the way over and changed back into himself. Self-possessed, indeed, to the extent that he seemed to be wearing an extra layer of himself. As we drove to the pub he trailed his cigarette out of the window so that the ash flaked away. When we got there he leaned on the bar, cleared the empty glasses out of his way, jabbed a fiver at the barman, and waved me to a spare table.

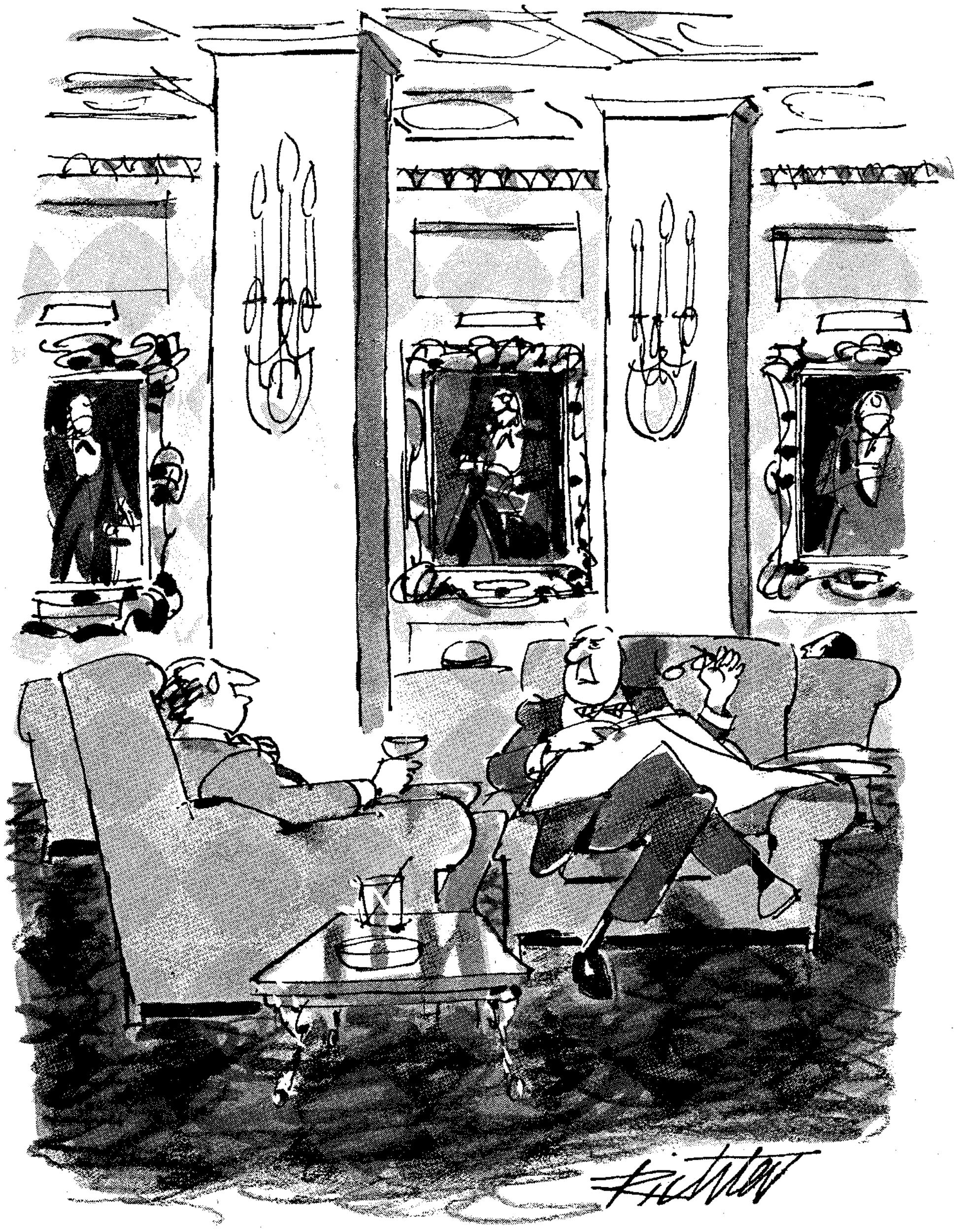
He came back with the drinks, and I said, "How was Spokane?"

For a moment he stared back, looked blank. Then he said firmly, "Nothing to report."

That was that, then. Had he been there at all? He told me about Egypt, Singapore, Melbourne, Tahiti, more about Manila—yet as he was talking I felt I knew about them all anyway. He'd seen this and that, eaten this and that, drunk this and that, but anyone could have, it seemed, even me. It just happened to have been him. This was listening to a tourist guide.

After a while we ran out of things to say, and we found ourselves looking into our glasses. I tried again. "So . . . how did you meet her?" The Spokane girl.

Jo shrugged. "Some bar. Went in for some matches. Fell in . . . fell in with her. . . ." He looked up. "I did nothing for two months, Brian . . ." He was shaking his head in wonder. "Spent a lot of money just treading water, just being so *emotional* all the time. No time or energy for anything else. All the while thinking I could see myself changing minute by minute—as if I was watching the world from the moon, watching it slowly grind into a slow spin, and then keep



“Once, years ago, I gave a sucker an even break, but it didn’t work out.”

• •

turning slowly. While it was happening it seemed like I would remember every minute. Now it just feels as if I stayed up all night for ten weeks. Someone who just *limits* the world so wonderfully for you: limits it to them. . . .”

*Spo*kane, man, I was thinking, *spo*kane! This was *adjectival*. Precious and weird and stilled—Jo never usually sounded like this. (2): Digressive; bringing you to a halt; throwing a spoke in the wheel: *adj* SPOKANE.

I said, “And now you’re better.”

“Now I’m here,” said Jo. All this, it appeared, had only receded as far as the wrong end of jet lag: not past, only other. He might have left there that morning.

THE past, it seemed, came on overnight. Jo turned up the next day without warning, just as I was about to go to work. He looked as if he hadn’t slept all night. He said he was hungry. I made him a sandwich, but he only took a few bites and then crumbled bits off it to drop into my goldfish tank. He had to tell someone, he said, although it would do no good at all. He said that each time he spoke about it just made it worse, but the only way to try and get things right seemed to be to talk some more.

“When did things first go wrong?” I asked.

“When I phoned you,” he said. “I was *desperate* to tell someone about how I felt—to celebrate!—and it seemed it couldn’t be her. But when I spoke to you I was talking to the wrong person. It was nothing to do with you—and you weren’t anything to do with it. . . .

“I *had* to try and say something to her, to be sure it was me taking part in all of this. I told you, Brian—how free all this was. How we must have known how much we were using each other, and it didn’t matter—I couldn’t believe how we never had to negotiate anything between us. I only wanted to say those two things to her.”

At last. Now we were in the past tense. This was leading up to the something done. Told, after all that silence, at length, all told: a broad scene-setting adjective telescoped into a past participle—Spokane.

Jo had stopped. “There’s *still* nothing to tell! As soon as I try to, there’s nothing worth saying! This is really cheap and silly.” He thought again. “I’m back here now, that’s all”—he was talking to himself, or at least there was nothing for me to say. “And I should just shut up. If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” He hesitated, then meandered out to the front door, eased it open and then shut again after him. This time neither of us had even mentioned the word, whatever it was, so properly speaking it was twice in all, not three times, since we never did again.

After he’d gone I sat there in the kitchen for a while. Spokane. Some kind of sad verdict, then: a shaming and a guilt—but for what? What happened? Jo only seemed to use the word to fend the whole business off; it was all I had. Spokane. As though someone has tried to say something in English, and only made it sound foreign or distant or just wrong: put it into words that can’t then be taken back. *That which is now spokane.* Something harmless now distorted, by being spoken, into a judgment. *I spik; he haf spukkann. I spake; thou hast spoakain.* Words their own parody, self-ridicule—better not to have spoken at all. I was getting confused. Spokane. A nonsense in such a context: it conjures up all the wrong things. However you say it it sounds wrong.

—GRAHAM COSTER

THE TALKING DOG OF THE WORLD

IN Hanley, West Virginia, close on to Wheeling, where I lived when I was little, there was a poky little circus run by Hopey Paris. Most places don't have their own circus on the premises, not even a little one like Hopey's, which had almost no animals and a busted trapeze and these admission tickets that must have been printed up before the Civil War. You couldn't even read what they said on them anymore. In Hanley we figured it was O.K. to have this circus, though most of us didn't care about it one way or the other. Anyway, you never knew when Hopey was going to put his circus on, because he ran it by whim. Also, he owned the dime store. I expect what he got out of the dime store he plowed back into keeping the circus going, since he didn't own anything else.

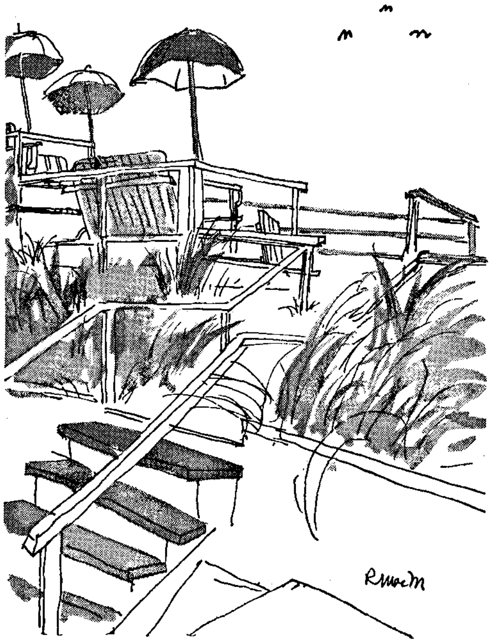
It was like this about having the circus: Some night in light weather, mostly at the tip end of summer, when everyone would just sit around and wait for something cool to happen, Hopey would come up from his end of town and find a crowd on the steps of wherever it was they were . . . someone's porch, whoever had beer. He'd wait about three lulls, nodding and shaking along with the gist of things as they got said. Then he'd go, "Guess I'll have to have the circus tonight." And everyone would get everyone else and go on over, because, look, what else is there to do? You go to the circus.

What a funny circus—but how much do you want for free? Hopey handed out the admission tickets in a little booth at the entrance and you would take your seat inside the tent, which stood in Hopey's back yard, hanging on by a thread to these old poles. It wasn't a big tent, of course, but, as it is said, size isn't substance. And then Hopey would come in with a whip and this hat he got somewhere to be a ringmaster in. You'd want to think he would look pathetic, wouldn't you? Hopey Paris trying to hold down a circus all by himself in Hanley? He didn't, though. He didn't look much like anything. But he did have a star attraction, the clown dog.

It's crazy about dogs—how some can do things and some can't. I knew a dog once that caught softballs in the air if you threw them underhand. Then he'd go racing off with the ball in his teeth and you'd have to trap him and pry the ball out with a stick. That was his trick, I guess is how he looked at it. And my father had a dog named Bill who was quite a hero in his day. Bill ran away finally and never came back.

But the clown dog sure was prime. He had this costume—a yellow coat sort of thing with polka dots, which he wore fastened around his middle, and a red cone hat with a little pom-pom at the top. Whether the circus was on or off, and in all weathers, never, never did you see the clown dog out of costume. And his trick was he could talk. That dog could really talk.

This was why we would always come back to see the same old one-man circus, with no animals or clowns except one animal-clown, like that was all you needed to call it a circus. The tent was hardly alive at all, the big-top tent itself. But you always had to go back, because you wanted to see how the trick was done. Because no dog, not even a circus trick dog, can talk. But the thing about tricks is whether or not you can figure them out. That's the art of tricks, right there. And the clown dog, though he often roamed around his end of town like any other dog, free in the sun, except he was dressed—the clown dog would never do his talking except in the circus. This was probably the deal he made with Hopey, who was, after all, his master. You'd suppose that they must have come to terms on something that important.



That's what's so funny. Because, speaking of dogs, my father never did come to terms with his dog, Bill, though he would try, hard as stone, to make that dog his. He trained it and trained it. It must have run near on to two years of sessions in Sunshine's field, and Bill just didn't ever submit and be trained. My father was a ferocious trainer by the standards of any region, but he couldn't get Bill to obey even the most essential commands. And he never could teach him not to chase around the davenport, especially late at night, when Bill most felt like a run. "I will have that dog behave," my father said, and I recall how he looked, like behavior was just around the corner. But Bill would not be suppressed. Sometimes he would come when you called, sometimes not. But even when he did come he had this funny look on him, as if he was coming over just to find out why you persisted in calling his name when it had already been established that he wasn't about to respond.

Bill was a mutt, not like the clown dog, who was a poodle—a very distinct breed. You can't miss a poodle, especially in a polka-dot coat and a cone hat with a pom-pom. But Bill was just another dog you might know, kind of slow for his race and disobedient but generally normal, except once when he was The Hero of '62. They called him that because he accidentally bit this management scud who was getting on everybody's nerves at the factory the summer before the strike.

McCosker, I think this guy's name was—one of those mouthy hirelings absolutely corrupted by a little power. He had been tacking up a notice by the front gate—some mouthy, powerful thing about something else you weren't supposed to do. He was just busy as anything tacking away and being hated by the people who were standing around watching. Suddenly Bill bounded over to where McCosker was. I guess maybe Bill thought he saw something to eat near his foot, but McCosker took it for some stunt and he made a sudden move and Bill got thrilled and bit him.

It was a tiny little bite on the ankle, kind of in passing, but McCosker screamed like he was being murdered and all the men cheered and patted Bill. And they all shook my father's hand, and mine, too. So Bill was The Hero of '62.

This is a funny thing. Because all Bill had done was what a dog will do every so often, whereas the clown dog was truly some kind of dog. Everybody said so. You just could not tell in any way that he wasn't talking when Hopey Paris brought him on for his circus turn. Now, that was a trained dog if ever there was one. Yet nobody ever called the clown dog a hero. And the clown dog never ran away, either, which Bill did once. Once is all it takes.

I guess you have to figure that a dog that goes around in circus clothes isn't going to earn the respect of the community. Besides him being a poodle, which is not one of your heroic breeds of dog. But I liked him, because he was the first thing I can remember in all my life. Hunkering back down in my mind as far as I can go, I reach a picture of the clown dog talking in the circus, and the polka dots, and the hat. I wonder if he ever had a name, because he was always known as the clown dog that I ever heard, and I don't recall Hopey ever calling to him. Sometimes Hopey would act like that dog was this big secret, cocking an eyebrow and looking cagey if you asked after him, as if everyone in town hadn't seen the circus a hundred times.

I expect the clown dog must have liked me, because he used to follow me around some days with his coat and his dumb little hat. He looked so sad. I guess he sensed that he was supposed to be a secret, because he tended to hang back a little, like someone who has already been tagged out of a game and is waiting for the next thing to start. I don't recall that he even barked. And he never gave in to us when we tried to get him to talk out of the circus.

Of course we had listened, with all the concentration of adolescents, to the exact words Hopey used in the act, when the clown dog would speak, and we would try these words on the clown dog ourselves—imitating Hopey's voice even, and standing the way he stood, to be an imperial ringmaster. But we couldn't make it happen; never did the clown dog utter a word out of his context, the circus. It was the strangest thing.

I was just thinking that I would have hated to be around Bill someday if someone tried to get him into a hat with pom-poms.

TWO POEMS

INNOCENTS OF LEBLON

The innocents of Leblon
didn't see the ship arrive.
Has it brought ballerinas?
Has it brought emigrants?
Has it brought a gram of radium?
They wouldn't know, aware of nothing
but the hot sand and a fine oil
they knead into their shoulders and forget.

WITHIN A BUDDING GROVE

The sweet shade of girls in their teens,
no better place to lie down and rest.
The shade is green, lacelike, useless,
the unripened fruit just out of reach.
You just can't reach . . . The shadows
cover the ground, a quivering net.

Their smiles are so far away.
Inside you twists a longing
they've never known. The young girls
laugh and dance, floating on air,
each name called out a hidden
caress.

They'll marry, but they won't marry you.
And marry they do—try to stop them.
In the middle of the park, on the promenade,
a blind man waits impatiently for an arm,
all the arms twist into a noose,
but don't hang yourself or waste your time
in a thousand Proustian analyses,
son.

On the promenade, beneath the tree,
the girls' shadows sink into the blind man,
and the day that dawns behind his eyes
is blurry and quiet, like a Sunday.
And in him all the bells ring out,
and in the shade desires die out,
ripe fruit falling to the ground and splitting
open.

—CARLOS DRUMMOND DE ANDRADE

(*Translated, from the Portuguese, by Ron Horning.*)

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I WAS at college when Bill ran away, so I only know about it second hand, from stories. I couldn't help thinking it was presumable that in the end Bill would take a walk one day and not come back. It was presumable. But still I was surprised to hear of it. It was Easter, when I was a freshman, and the first sight I got of home when I got off the bus was my father cutting the grass with the Johnsons' lawnmower and Bill nowhere to be seen. I knew something was wrong then, because Bill never missed a chance to play dogfight with the Johnsons' lawnmower, which always enraged my father. Bill would growl at it, for starters, lying way off somewhere, and slowly creep toward it, paw by paw. Then he'd run around it, fussing and barking, and at last he'd get into rushing it, like he was going in for the kill, only to back up snarling at the last second.

So when I saw the lawnmower and no Bill I thought he must be sick, but my father said he had run off, maybe as far back as October sometime. I listened carefully to this, though he didn't talk carefully, not ever in all his life that I knew him. Whatever he was thinking when he spoke, that's what he'd say, as tough as you can take it. He didn't expect Bill back, he said, and he didn't miss him. He said it, and I believe him.

"No," he said lazily, because he is lazy. "I don't miss him. You run away from home and don't come back, nobody misses you at all. That's the rule."

I don't know of any rule saying you don't miss a runaway dog, even if he never comes back. If he's of a mind to run, there's usually a good reason. My father used to say, "There's always a reason for something, and sometimes two."

That was one of his wisdoms. He had wisdoms for most things that came up in life—lawyers, school, elections, working. He had his wisdoms for Bill, too, even when it was really clear that that dog was born to go his own way in a nice wisdom of the animal kingdom.

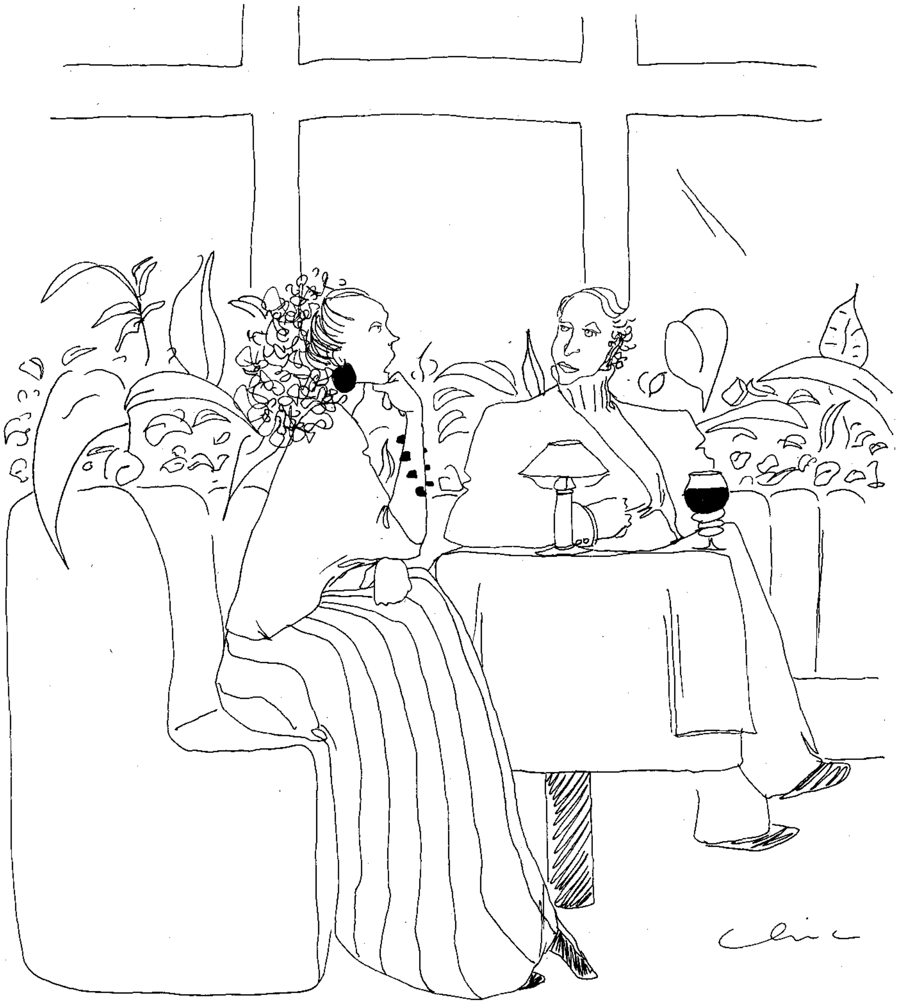
I can see why that dog took off, anyway, because my father wasn't any too easy to get along with, especially when proclaiming one of his wisdoms. But despite what he said and how he looked saying it, I suppose he really did love that dog. Or he wanted to love it, which would be the way people like my father express affection. It must have threatened to tear him up some when Bill deserted him.

That was a bad time, too, with the strike coming sooner or later but sure as doom. I wasn't around for the strike. I was sixteen when I finished high school, and I could still have been young some more and not done much of anything with myself, but I had more ambition than to work in the factory or pump gas on Route 16. So I went to college on what you might call a soccer scholarship. My father always poked fun at me for playing soccer. "What kind of sport is that for a man, chasing a ball around with your feet? You look like a bunch of giant bugs" was his view of it. But soccer took me to college, on a full scholarship. It's true, I guess; soccer isn't much of a sport, and this wasn't much of a college. But one wisdom might be that college is college. Anyway, I went.

I came home for Easter because I was only two states away—one long bus ride. Besides, they closed the dorms on me—they were painting—and I had to go somewhere. That first night, Thursday, when I came home and saw the lawnmower and learned that Bill had run away, I was standing in the yard with my bag, like a salesman, and I decided to walk around town instead of just being home. Because I already knew about home, but I felt mysterious about Hanley—that it was a place filled with riddles that ought to be solved, even by someone who had lived his whole life of sixteen years so far in it.

I thought maybe I would take a look over to Hopey Paris's circus, in case that should be going on. Or maybe I would talk Hopey into doing his show just for me, because it was extremely rare that the circus would happen this early in the year. I had an idea that Hopey favored me over some others of my generation there in Hanley because I had always been the keenest of all to see the clown dog and figure out how he talked, and Hopey was pleased to be appreciated, even by kids.

He liked to think (I'm guessing at this) that his circus, starring the clown dog, which he celebrated as The Talking Dog of the World—that his circus was what kept the town from feeling too complete. You might suppose that a town with a circus is more complete than most, but instead I sense that it is less complete, and therefore



"Sorry, Eric, but before I commit to anybody I still need about three years of fun."

• •

more open and more free. Because a circus is magic. And having its own private circus reminds the town of all the other magic things it doesn't have. It puts the town a little in touch with another town, a secret town that is the ghostly image of itself, a kind of myth in a mirror. Now, so long as the town is aware of its ideal twin, it will wonder about itself, and never think it knows everything there is to know, and not pretend that it is complete. Which I think is all to the good. So no wonder I liked to watch the clown dog's act. And that's why I went over to Hopey Paris's circus on my first night back from college—to watch the ghost dance by me again. Even after all those years, I still didn't understand how the clown dog did his trick.

This was the act. Hopey comes in with his whip and his hat and he stands in the ring. "And now we take great pride and the most highly principled pleasure"—this is exactly what he said every time—"in presenting for your delectation and enlightenment the one and only clown dog—The Talking Dog of the World!"

And out from behind a flap of the tent, in his coat and pom-pom hat, the clown dog would trot in. And he would sit on his hind legs looking expectantly at Hopey. That same old coat and hat. That poor little clown dog. Or I guess maybe he was well off, even if no one called him a hero.

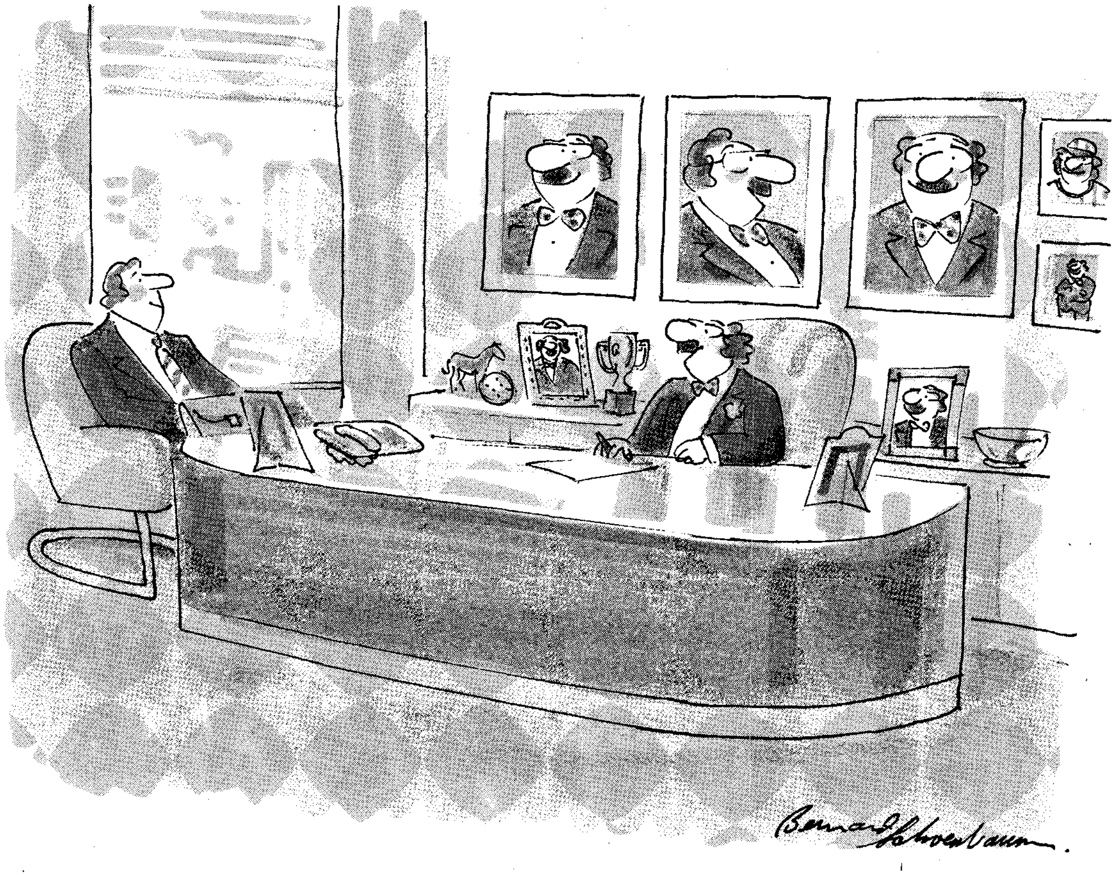
In any case, Hopey would say, "Tell these folks here assembled who you *are*"—like that, with everything on the "are." And—I swear to God—the clown dog would answer, as if he was going to growl first. But no, it was this funny talking—"Clown . . . dog." Like that, broken up into words. It was a high voice, tensely placed, like the sounds puppets make on television. And of course we were looking madly from the clown dog to Hopey and back, to see that trick.

Then Hopey would say, "Who is the *clown dog*?" And the clown dog would answer, "Me." Something screwy would happen in his mouth, as if he were biting a fly or had bubble gum. And his head would tilt. But he talked, all right, and that was some trick. Just these two questions were all the talking, though. Because then Hopey would shout, "Leap, clown dog!" and the poodle just leaped right into Hopey's arms and licked his face. That was the whole act, and that was also the whole circus.

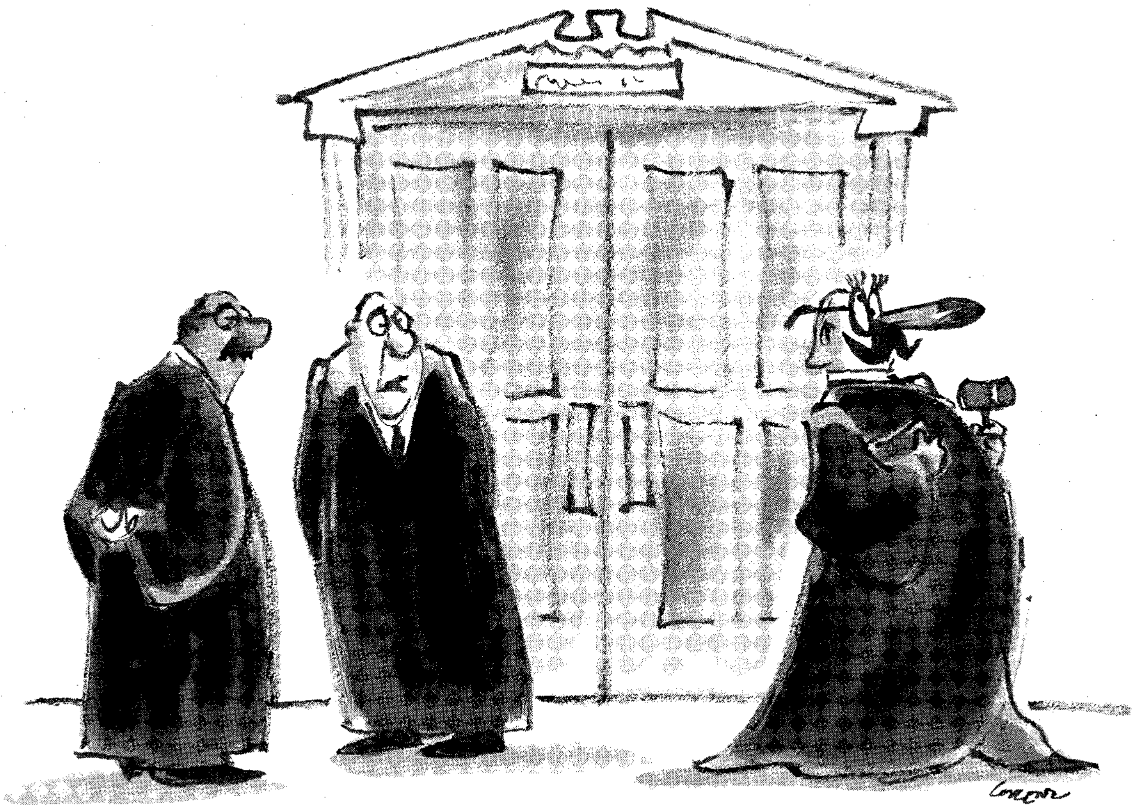
I MISS that circus, for it is miles away from me now. All my youth and adventures in Hanley seem remote, rare things to savor, like slides of ruins in a stereopticon—though I keep my memories somewhat close to me by writing about them, as you can see. I write to preserve (even to rescue) them. But when I went home that Easter I didn't have the circus in mind as something you ever lose hold of, because I didn't realize about growing old. Now, that is a term for you—"growing old." And it, too, has a trick: it contains the thought that things vanish. They function, and they pass, and you also pass along, and perhaps you come to the big city here (as I have), and you learn a new function, like writing, and think about who you are. And somewhere in there you remember the old things, and the other place, and suddenly you realize how much you miss them. And this tells you how you have your own completion to accomplish.

I didn't reckon on any of this at the time, back in Hanley on my Easter vacation. I was just out for a stroll. I should have stopped and seen everything the way a camera sees, marking it down, so when I grew old everything that was there wouldn't have vanished even in completion. I just wanted a little peace.

The thing was that if I was sixteen the clown dog must have been well on to thirteen or fourteen. He just never acted old, so it was not something to realize. Fourteen is old for a dog, and that's near as long as a dog can last without vanishing, even if he still acts spry and bouncy and leaps into your arms when you tell him. So I just went up to Hopey's door and knocked, thinking he'd be there like



"I'm one of those lucky few the camera loves."



"Gravitas, yes—but with a saving leaven of wit."

• •

always, and maybe Hopey would rustle up the circus just for me in honor of my coming back from college on my first holiday.

The house was lit inside, but no one answered, so I went around to the back, where the tent was. Except there was no tent there now. You could see the tracks in the dirt where it used to be, all the time before, and some of the bleacher seats were still there, a little wrecked, like someone had been trying to take them apart and then suddenly changed his mind. And as I stood there wondering, I heard Hopey's back door open. I turned and saw him in the doorway, so I asked him where the circus had gone to.

"My little clown dog passed away," Hopey said, "so I cut down the tent and dissolved the circus."

It happened in October, he said, which would have been only a few weeks after I left town for school. I didn't know what to tell him without making it seem like I was holding another funeral, and I was worried about words because I got distracted thinking about the clown dog's little hat and how sad he looked in it sometimes. You know how touchy it can be, lurking about a place and looking like a stranger. And what if I asked how did it happen and only made Hopey feel worse? I didn't ask. I must have stood there for a whole minute trying to get my mouth around a sentence.

"He liked you, you know," Hopey said suddenly. "Perhaps you suppose that I was busy in the store, but I knew who his friends were. He was a pickety chooser, but he had exquisite taste in people. Didn't you think so?"

"I think he was a shy little fellow," I said.

"Yes, that he was."

"I'm sorry, Hopey. I came over especially to see him again." Now that I'd found my tongue, I expected he would break down or get very quiet, but he was just so calm. The clown dog used to follow me around, I wanted to say. We tried to make him talk. But we never hurt him.

"Since he liked you," said Hopey, "do you want to plumb the mystery of how he talked?"

I had to smile now. "It was a trick, wasn't it?"

"It was a tip-top trick," Hopey replied, "because nobody knew how it was done. Bet I shouldn't spoil it for you after all this. Should I? Do you want to know?"

"I think I ought to plumb the mystery, if he liked me, after all."

"He didn't like everyone," said Hopey. "But I believe he was exceptionally popular in the town."

"I guess he had to be," I said. "No other circus dog that I heard tell of has ever been the headline attraction."

"Well, he certainly was that. And he led a rich life. He was The Talking Dog of the World."

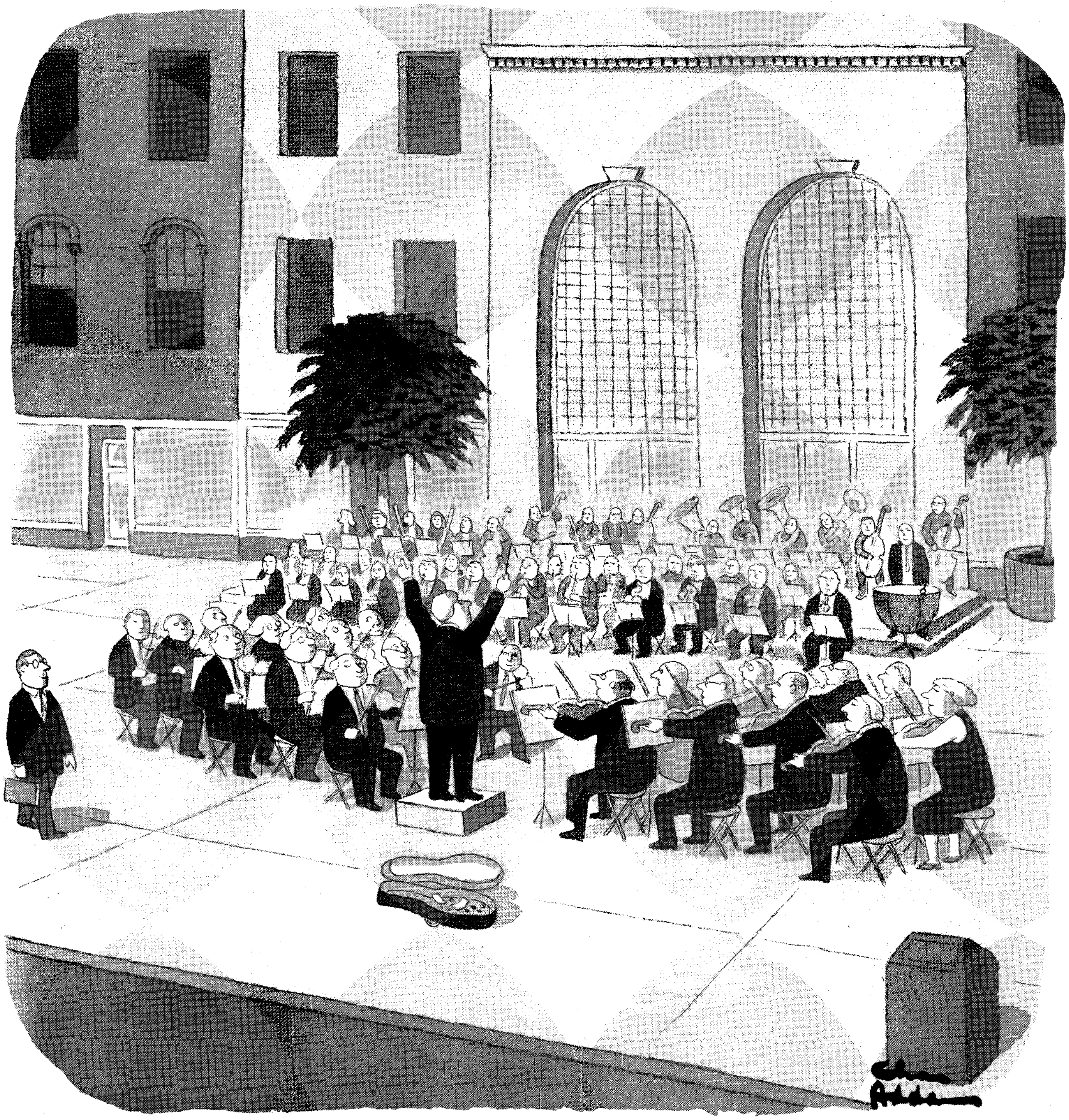
Hopey asked me about college then, and I told him, and after a while there was this natural space to say goodbye, so I left. Hopey forgot to tell me the trick and I forgot to remind him that I should know it, but I didn't think it was fitting to go back there just then, and before I was halfway home I was glad I didn't find out.

You'd think I would be unhappy to learn that the clown dog had died, but in a way that conversation with Hopey was the only nice thing that happened that whole vacation. My father was in a terrible mood the whole time, spitting out wisdoms like he was on a quota system and falling behind. He kept talking about the strike that everyone knew was going to happen, and finally, a few days before I was due to go back to school, he asked me didn't I think my place was here with the people I'd known all my life instead of at some college?

It seemed to me that the place to be during a strike was as far from it as possible, and college would do for that as well as any. And that's what I told him. So he said if I felt that way about it I might as well get going right now.

"Just like Bill," he said.

I was waiting for that. I didn't have anything prepared to say back to it, but



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I knew it was coming. I don't care. It was meant to hurt me, but it didn't, though I must admit it began to gnaw on me after a while . . . because I hoped it was true.

I really did.

"Just like Bill," he said, but he meant more like "Go vanish."

"Just like Bill"—because I was leaving him, too. Well, there's always a reason for something, and sometimes two. I never went back to Hanley, either; maybe Bill did, after I left, but I won't. I have heard those words often since in my mind, *Just like Bill*, in just the way he said it, looking so smug that he had doped it out at last, made the simple sum and added another wisdom to his collection. I could accept it if I had to, but the truth is I am no way like Bill, all told. I am not like anyone. Whenever someone asks who I am, I say, "Me," just like the clown dog did, because it cheers me to remember him, and to think back on how I could have heard the trick if I had wanted to, which is as close as anybody ought to get. That was a strange, but fine, animal.

—ETHAN MORDDEN

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Services will be at 2 p.m. Sunday, May 22, at the family home. The Rev. Carol Carnes will officiate. He will be cremated.—*San Luis Obispo County (Calif.) Telegram-Tribune.*

After the benediction, of course.

ANNALS OF WAR

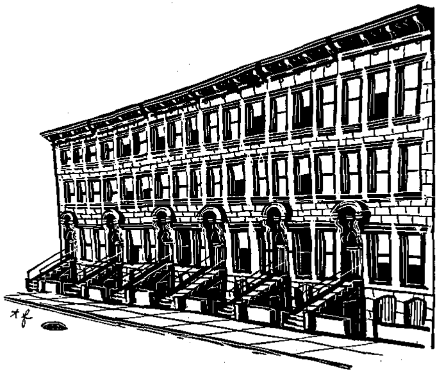
AN AMERICAN SOLDIER IN VIETNAM

IV—THE CIVILIAN GENERAL

THE Vietnam to which John Paul Vann returned in late March, 1965, was a nation on the threshold of the most violent war in its history. At the beginning of the month, Lyndon Johnson had started Operation Rolling Thunder, the bombing campaign against North Vietnam. Two United States Marine battalions, the first of many, had landed at Danang to secure the airfield there as one of the staging bases for the bombing raids. In Saigon, the staff of General William Westmoreland, who had succeeded Paul Harkins as chief of the United States Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV), had taken the first step in the planning that was to bring hundreds of thousands of United States troops into South Vietnam with artillery and armor and fleets of fighter-bombers for a new American war to destroy the Vietnamese Communists and their followers. "We are going to stomp them to death," one of Westmoreland's staff members predicted.

Vann had retired from the Army in 1963, ostensibly because of his opposition to the way the Pentagon was pursuing the war in Vietnam. In reality, he had retired for personal reasons. He had once faced a threat of court-martial for statutory rape because of an affair with a fifteen-year-old girl. He had escaped a court-martial, even though he had been guilty of the accusation, but he knew that the blemish on his record would prevent him from ever being promoted to general. After two years as a sales executive in Denver for Martin Marietta, an armaments and aerospace company, living unhappily with his wife, Mary Jane, and his five children, he had succeeded in returning to Vietnam as a civilian province-pacification representative for the Agency for International Development (AID).

One of the first people Vann saw the day after his return to Saigon, on Sunday, March 21, 1965, was Huynh Van Cao, his former counterpart in the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) during Vann's tour of duty in 1962-63. They had dinner at Cao's house in the Joint General Staff compound near Tan Son Nhut Airbase on the edge of the city. In his complicated way, Vann kept friendships with Vietnamese he got to know, despite the worst of quarrels. Cao, one of those with whom he had quarrelled, was now grateful for an offer of financial help that Vann had made from Denver in the months immediately after the American-instigated overthrow of President Ngo Dinh Diem in November of 1963, when it appeared that Cao might be thrown out of the ARVN and left without means to support his wife and many children. As it turned out, Cao had not needed the help. He had managed to ingratiate himself with a number of his fellow Saigon generals amid the political turmoil that set in after the coup against Diem. He spent the dinner filling Vann in on the coups and countercoups by the generals and their civilian political allies of the moment and on the street riots by the Buddhist and Catholic factions that had occupied Saigon during the two years of Vann's absence while the Vietcong had grown ever more menacing in the countryside. The group currently on top was the so-called Young Turk faction of generals, dominated by Air Vice-Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky, the commander of the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF). Fortunately for Cao, the second-ranking member of the faction was Brigadier General Nguyen Van Thieu, who, like Cao, was a Roman Catholic from Central Vietnam. Vann's absence had not diminished his ability to observe his former counterpart. "It is evident that Cao never has and never will participate in a coup," Vann wrote that night in a diary he kept intermittently for the first six months after his return. "He is deathly afraid and does his best to straddle the fence on all issues." In the future, the two men would remain friends socially, but their professional lives would go separate ways.



Vann got a cold reception on Monday morning at the Saigon office of the United States Operations Mission (USOM), as AID was then called in Vietnam. While AID's Washington headquarters was eagerly recruiting retired military men to staff its pacification program, its civilian bureaucrats in Vietnam were worried that their agency was going to be taken over by the military. Retired officers like Vann were regarded as infiltrators. The only man to welcome him was another infiltrator, an Army friend who was still on active duty, Colonel Samuel Wilson, a fellow-Virginian who had served with distinction in Burma with Merrill's Marauders during the Second World War. Wilson was on loan to AID to head its pacification program. He informed Vann that because of controversy over Vann's feud with General Harkins and bureaucratic resistance, Vann would have to display his worth at the bottom, in the field, before he could move up. The previous fall, Westmoreland had designated the six provinces surrounding Saigon the priority area for pacification. Wilson assigned Vann to Hau Nghia—the most insecure of the six.

HAU NGHIA, between Saigon and the Cambodian border to the west, was approximately five hundred square miles of reeds, rice paddies, and sugarcane. It was such a "Siberia assignment"—Vann's term—that the regime was currently unable to find a chief for the province. The last province chief had been jailed for complicity in the most recent abortive coup, in February. The job had subsequently been offered to two other ARVN officers, and both had refused it. Except for the capital, Bau Trai, where Vann made his headquarters, the district towns, half a dozen hamlets, and some outposts that still existed at the sufferance of the guerrillas, Hau Nghia had been ceded to the Vietnamese Communists.

A vacuum of leadership and a confrontation were precisely the circumstances in which John Vann thrived. Although his job for USOM was to supervise school building, hog raising, refugee relief, and similar civilian pacification projects, he immediately began scheming to take Hau Nghia back from the Vietcong. He told the assistant he found waiting for him in Bau Trai—Douglas Ramsey, a thirty-year-old Foreign Service officer, who had reached the province a month earlier—that they could not afford to stay off the roads and ride helicopters, and thereby let the guerrillas deny them access to the population. Convoys also would not permit them the freedom of movement they needed, he said, and he felt they would actually be in less danger driving alone. The Vietcong interdicted all official traffic, and whenever they wished they set up roadblocks to collect taxes from commercial trucks and to kidnap individual soldiers riding in civilian buses, but otherwise they permitted civilian vehicles to move freely on the roads that were still open. Vann believed he and Ramsey would be able to drive where and when they wanted and have a reasonable chance of staying alive if they kept their pattern as irregular as possible and checked with the local police or militia before starting down a stretch of road.

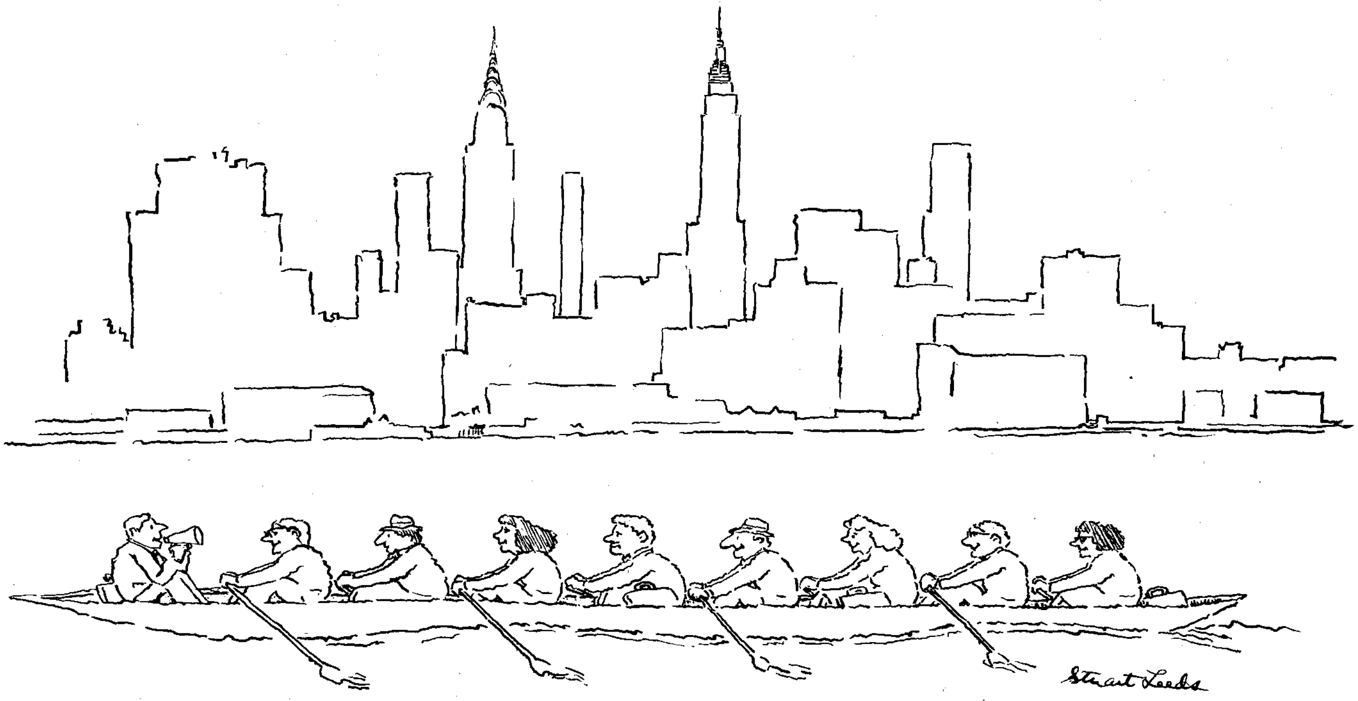
Near the end of April, a new province chief arrived—Major Nguyen Tri Hanh, who had been promised a quick promotion to lieutenant colonel to induce him to accept Hau Nghia. Hanh, a Southern Catholic, was a husky man of forty-five with a stolid temperament, and he was a surprise: he was straightforward in manner, appeared honest, and seemed sincerely committed to governing the province well. "I'll have him in the palm of my hand in thirty days," Vann predicted to Ramsey.

Two nights later, in the predawn of April 28, 1965, the Vietcong reminded Vann that good will and hard work would not suffice to rescue Hau Nghia or to win the war in Vietnam. At 2:30 A.M. the guerrillas started firing 81-mm. mortar shells into Bau Trai to discourage artillerymen there from supporting an ARVN Ranger company that the Vietcong were assaulting at the same moment in a hamlet two miles away. Radio contact with the company was lost immediately. When Vann drove to the hamlet early in the morning, he found the company annihilated—thirty-five Rangers dead, sixteen missing and captured, and eleven wounded survivors left behind by the attackers. The assault force had consisted of elements of a regional guerrilla battalion rich in American machine guns and other automatic and semiautomatic weapons captured from the Saigon troops, and also in heavier recoilless cannon and mortars smuggled in by sea from the North. (The Vietcong, who in 1962 had been fortunate if a battalion possessed a couple of machine guns, now had three in each platoon—just as the United States Army had.)

The guerrillas had hardly needed to employ their heavy armament. Though another Ranger company had been lost at the same hamlet the previous October, the officers and noncoms of this company had failed to take the most elementary precautions. No outer listening posts had been organized or trip flares set up, and no foxholes had been dug for a perimeter defense. The company had simply bedded down for the night around a house near the elementary school at one end of the hamlet. The peasants told Vann that the Rangers had been asleep. He also learned that women and children from the hamlet had come with torches as soon as the attack was over to collect the Rangers' weapons and to help carry away wounded and dead guerrillas. The local people had been abused by the Rangers and detested them. Vann noticed that the guerrillas had been careful not to harm any of the other houses in the hamlet with their fire; only the one house near the

ICE CREAM
KOREN

"This is serious butter-pecan!"



THE 8:17 FROM DOBBS FERRY

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school and the school itself were damaged.

The deterioration on the Saigon side was far beyond anything Vann could have imagined in Denver. The American intelligence adviser on the province military-advisory staff was convinced that the commander of the 25th Division in Hau Nghia, Colonel Phan Truong Chinh, was a Communist agent. It did not seem possible for any commander to behave so consistently for the benefit of the enemy out of mere incompetence or cowardice, and Chinh appeared to be a smart man. He had a reputation as an amateur poet. Chinh, of course, was not a Communist agent, and Ramsey, looking back a decade later, decided that Chinh was probably just terrified of the Vietcong and thought that his troops would be torn apart if they seriously engaged the enemy. Chinh was too cruel to the peasantry—he targeted hamlets for air strikes and regularly blew up houses and blasted away people with artillery—to have been a genuine Communist sympathizer.

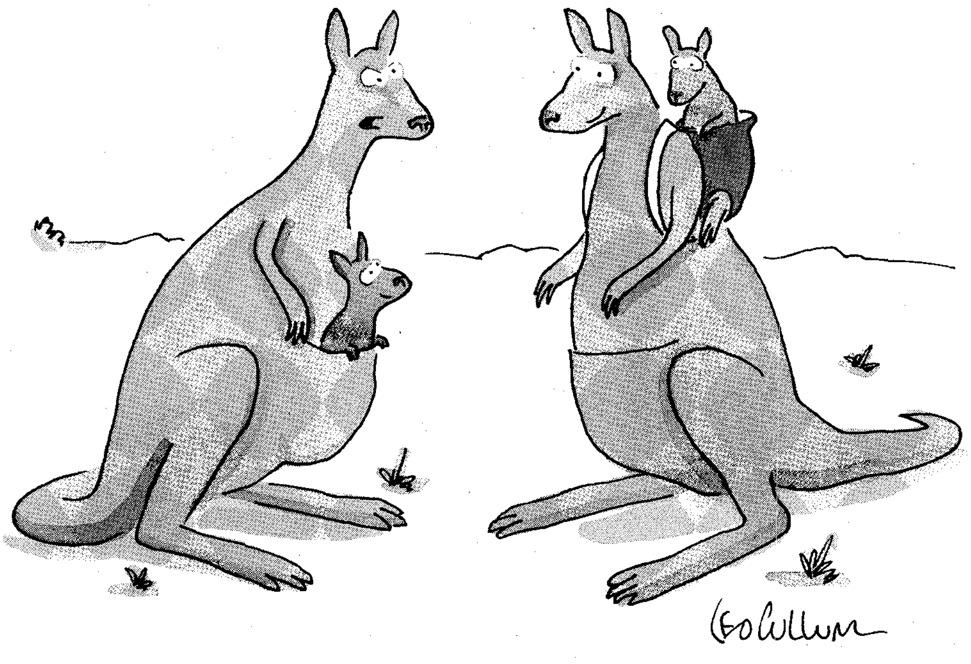
The question of where incompetence and stupidity ended and treachery and sabotage began was, nevertheless, a real one. Vietcong penetration of the Saigon side had always been a major problem, and it became ever graver as the fortunes of the regime declined and men and women turned their coats to hedge against the future. The suspicion bred by the subversion was even more corrosive. No one trusted anyone. In the village center of Trung Lap, north of Bau Trai, where a Ranger training camp was situated, the village chief, the local militia commander, and the head of the training camp accused each other of being Vietcong agents. The village chief moved elsewhere, in fear for his life, after a guerrilla commando squad walked into the place one day disguised in Ranger uniforms and shot seven genuine Rangers.

An incident one evening seemed to typify the despair. A Vietcong propaganda troupe decided to entertain the population of another large village just off the main road to Saigon a few miles west of the district town of Cu Chi. The troupe set up its show in the village movie theatre, which was right across the street from a school where an ARVN company was bivouacked. The propaganda troupe was armed and had a small escort. The lieutenant in charge of the company ordered his men to attack the guerrillas. They refused. He got in his jeep and drove to Cu Chi to ask the district chief what to do. They discussed the problem for a while and then both of them went out and got drunk.

After the destruction of the Ranger company at the hamlet two miles from Bau Trai, Vann wrote a friend in Denver that he should not hold out any hope that the bombing of the North would alter events in the South, because "regrettably, we are going to lose this war." The letter went on:

> We're going to lose because of the moral degeneration in South Vietnam coupled with the excellent discipline of the VC. This country [South Vietnam] has pissed away its opportunities so long it is now force of habit—and apparently nothing is going to change them.
>
> I'm bitter . . . not at these ridiculous little Oriental play soldiers—but at our goddam military geniuses and politicians for refusing to admit and act on the obvious—to take over the command of this operation lock, stock, and barrel—but maintaining Vietnamese front men. It is such a hopeless situation that nothing else will work. The little bastard, General Ky, made a speech today demanding that we invade the North and liberate North Vietnam—the goddamn little fool can't even drive a mile outside of Saigon without an armed convoy and he wants to liberate the North! How damned ridiculous can you get?

BACK in 1962, during his first year in Vietnam, Vann had seen the solution to the war primarily in military terms—destruction of the regular Vietcong battalions in order to create enough security to gradually pacify the countryside. The means of destruction was an ARVN that would fight. The way to attain such an ARVN was through either a junta in Saigon or a strongman who would willingly take



"And you call yourself a marsupial?"

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American advice or could be dragooned by threats to withhold the military and economic aid that kept South Vietnam alive. In Hau Nghia, Vann was learning that the task the United States faced was a much more complicated and intractable one. He was finding out how parasitic and moribund the Saigon side was, some of the reasons for this condition, and the profound changes that would have to be made if Saigon was to prevail over Hanoi.

The worst of the ills Vann was encountering, and the one from which these other ills of demoralization and indiscipline seemed to arise, was corruption. He had not known before exactly how pervasive it was. He was discovering in Hau Nghia that corruption infected the whole of Saigon society—from Ky and Thieu and almost all the other Young Turk generals consolidating their power at the center to the corps and division commanders, and from the province and district chiefs and their administrators to the village policeman blackmailing a farmer into paying him a bribe not to report the farmer as a Vietcong suspect.

The Saigon regime had evolved a system in which no one was permitted to keep his hands clean. Saigonese corruption was incapacitating—a malignancy that poisoned the entire system of government. At a time when the Vietnamese on the Saigon side should have been joining together in *self-sacrifice and unity to prevent their world* from being destroyed, they were hastening its destruction. The greater the peril to their society became, the more viciously they preyed on one another. They seemed to loot with the assumption that they and their families would somehow escape the common disaster at the last moment, or that the Americans would step in and save them. Mostly, Vann concluded, their greed was too rapacious to permit any thought of its ultimate consequence.

The corruption was sabotaging USOM programs. The hamlet elementary schools that the USOM financed had an appeal for the peasants, because the farmers wanted their children to be educated. Yet when the Vietnamese contractor USOM employed in Hau Nghia built a school he put it up as shoddily as possible, and the benches and desks he provided were so poorly made that they did not last a year. The province and district officials naturally ignored the cheating, because the contractor was bribing them. Similarly, USOM funds marked for "Self-Help" projects to stimulate participation by the peasantry ended up going into hamlet and village offices, although these were certain to be subsequently abandoned, or wrecked by the Vietcong. Province officials kept proposing such projects because they got a rakeoff on each one. Vann sought to carry out the original purpose of the program and let the peasants choose what they wanted—probably another school or a clinic—and then give them the cement and roofing and other materials to build it themselves, so that they would take care of it and discourage the guerrillas from harming it. The province officials opposed the idea, because they would be deprived of their graft.

Corruption's biggest customer was the Vietcong. The guerrillas did not limit their purchases to such forbidden items as antibiotics and surgical instruments and dry-cell batteries for hand detonators to set off mines. They also bought false identification cards, security clearances for spies seeking jobs with United States agencies—almost anything they wanted—simply by paying the requisite prices and bribes.

But, Vann began to realize, the Vietcong were winning the war for a larger reason than this ruinous corruption and the other maladies of the Saigon regime. They were leading a social revolution in the South Vietnamese countryside and were harnessing its energy to their cause. Vann could understand this social revolution because his own impoverished childhood and youth enabled him to identify with the anger and the aspirations of poor Vietnamese, and because his refusal to abandon the roads gave him an opportunity to see the revolution occurring. Most days, he and Ramsey were out among the peasantry—escorting their cargo trucks carrying free American bulgur wheat (the Vietnamese found this inedible, and sold it for hog feed and used the money to buy rice), cooking oil, powdered milk, and other supplies to groups of refugees, or trying to move forward one of their programs designed to win the sympathy of the population.

Since there were only six Saigon-controlled hamlets in Hau Nghia, Vann and Ramsey had to build schools in hamlets dominated by the guerrillas if they were ever to build more than six. The task of building them gave Vann a tangible sense of why the Vietcong were winning the Vietnamese peasantry to their side. It took him into that halfway world where the guerrillas dominated and the majority of the population sympathized with them, but where the Vietcong's clandestine government had not yet had time to organize the community completely and eradicate every vestige of the Saigon regime and the United States. In areas

What if there were five seasons, instead of four? And two moons, instead of just one. Suppose a prehistoric rain had come in March instead of April? There may never have been a town called Vergeze, or a spring called Perrier. But luckily, everything happened just right.

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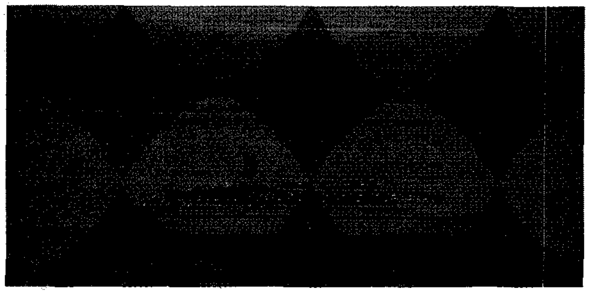
ACAPULCO PITCAIRN ISLAND GUAYAQUIL NAWILIWILI SANDAKAN KUALA LUMPUR LAHAINA
WILLEMSTAD LOS ANGELES KONA CALLAO PLAYA DEL CARMEN COZUMEL ISLAND FT. LAUDERDALE
PENANG ZHANJIANG KEELUNG HONOLULU HILO ENSENADA PUERTO VALLARTA CALDERA
BANGKOK PAPEETE EASTER ISLAND HONG KONG KAOHSIUNG MANILA BALI SEMARANG SAN JUAN

WHEN THE COUSTEAU SOCIETY GOT WORD OF OUR DARING NEW ITINERARIES, THEY DISPATCHED A CREW TO JOIN US.



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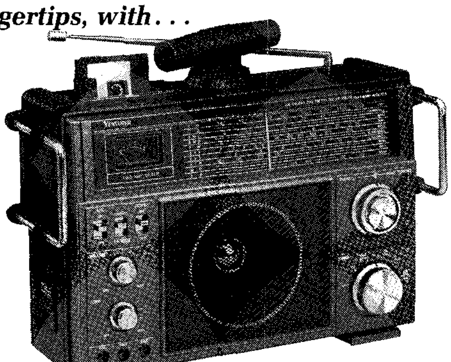

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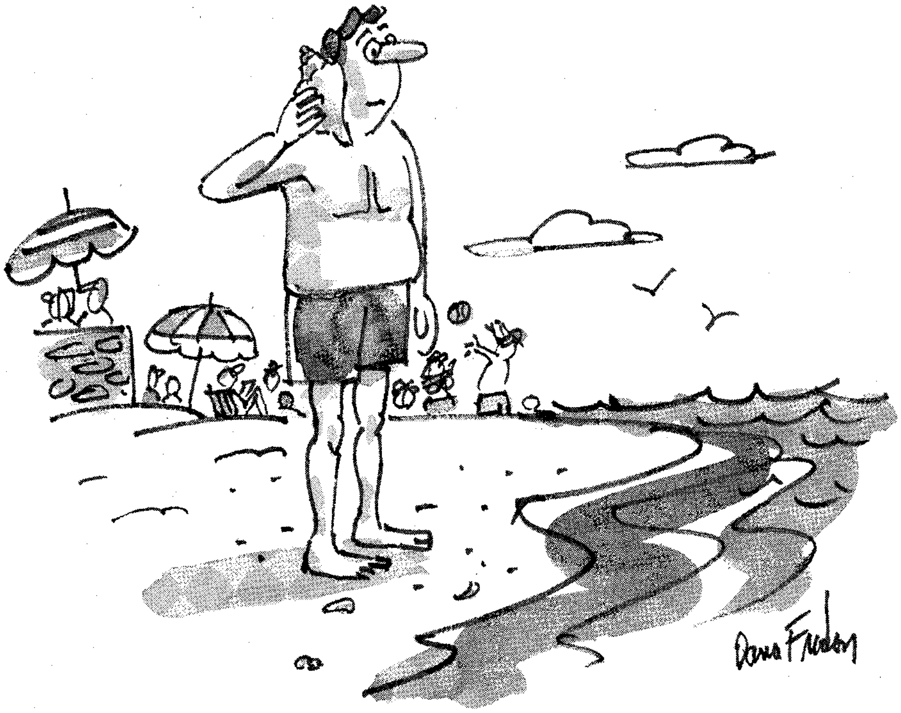
where the Vietcong had solidified control, they established their own school system, but they tolerated the American school-building program elsewhere, because the farmers were eager to have their children educated and many of the peasants themselves wanted to attend evening classes and learn how to read and write and do basic arithmetic. The local guerrillas and their children and relatives all benefitted. Though the teachers were Saigon-government employees, most of them were left undisturbed for the moment as long as they taught from a neutral point of view.

Vann made friends right away with the teacher at the hamlet where the Ranger company had been wiped out. She was a homely middle-aged woman of outgoing temperament. The fact that she was also the Vietcong medical worker for the hamlet—a place called So Do—did not seem to affect her attitude toward Vann and Ramsey. Vann won her gratitude by repairing her two-room school after the attack, and also by arranging corrective surgery for several children he noticed there who were afflicted with harelip—a congenital deformity that in the United States is usually corrected at birth. Vann started a program to have all children with harelip treated by the Filipino and South Korean surgical teams on loan to USOM. Many months later, he discovered that the So Do schoolteacher saved his life and Ramsey's on three occasions by persuading guerrillas who had planted a mine in the road and were waiting for them not to blow them up as they drove by.

THE sensible American course, Vann believed, would be to use the arriving American troops to secure Saigon and the ports and airfields and those inland cities and towns that, as a matter of prestige, must not be lost to the Communists. The primary, if unacknowledged, mission of the American troops would be political. They would provide the muscle to stop the coups and countercoups and bring the Saigon generals to heel. Behind the shield of the United States Army and Marine Corps, the United States would take over the regime and gradually turn it into a government whose leaders were not fundamentally corrupt. The Vietnamese soldiers of the ARVN and the Regional and Popular Forces (the new names given to the Civil

Guard and the Self-Defense Corps militia after the overthrow of Diem), not the American troops, would do most of the fighting in the countryside. The Saigon forces would have to be reorganized and reformed as they assumed the burden of defeating the Vietcong and beginning the pacification of the hamlets. This goal could be reached, Vann felt, by the creation of a "joint command" in which Americans would issue the orders. He began to focus on a new strategy—the details of a program to attract the peasantry and change the nature of Saigon society.



"The sounds of the sea come to you through the courtesy of the Clamshell Alliance."

In the meantime, Vann decided, the place to start changing things was Hau Nghia, and he would begin with an example of corruption he could do something about—the thieving Vietnamese contractor. Vann had been fighting a private guerrilla war with the contractor since he discovered that the man had corrupted another AID official with women. The contractor had included his wife among the women he had provided. While it might seem difficult to imagine circumstances in which John Vann would refuse free sex, sex as bribery was one of them. He had a weapon he could use against the crooked builder: USOM regulations required Vann to sign a release before the contractor could be paid for a completed project. Vann drove to a recently finished maternity clinic and to a school, climbed up to the roofs, counted the aluminum roofing sheets, and checked the records to see how many sheets had been issued to the contractor for the buildings. He then refused to sign payment releases until the contractor agreed to reimburse the United States government for the missing sheets. After a protracted bureaucratic struggle, Vann succeeded in persuading his AID superiors in Saigon, to whom the contractor had complained, that the man was a thief who had been bribing provincial officials and the AID official.

At noon on June 22nd, Vann was driving down Route 1, a two-lane tarmac road, toward Cu Chi, feeling good about his first campaign against corruption. He was alone in his favorite vehicle—an unarmored (armor would have slowed it down) canary-yellow International pickup truck. He spotted a group of men a short distance off his side of the road. Three of them were armed and dressed in the black pajamalike garments that the peasants, the Vietcong, and the Saigon militia all wore. They were walking in front of six young men who were stripped to the waist. The three armed men beckoned to Vann to stop. Thinking that they were militia who needed help in some emergency, Vann slowed down. As he did so, one of them raised a rifle and pointed it at him, changing Vann's mind about who was beckoning to him. He slammed his foot on the clutch, shoved the gear stick up into second, and began to accelerate away, smiling and waving out the open window of the truck in the hope that if these men were Vietcong with prisoners they might hesitate long enough for him to get away. The man who had been signalling most vigorously for Vann to stop pushed down his companion's rifle, smiled, and waved back.

In a few moments, Vann was clear of them and travelling down the potholed tarmac at seventy miles an hour. No guerrillas had ever before signalled to him to stop or behaved so oddly. As he was wondering whether they really had been Vietcong, he heard a volley of shots and the crack of bullets missing the pickup's cab. He ducked instinctively, just in time to keep his eyes from being filled with fragments of glass as more bullets punched holes through the windshield. The little truck careered off to the left into a graveyard that ran along both sides of the road. Vann jerked himself erect to get control of the vehicle, and saw his ambushers—about a dozen guerrillas strung out along the left side of the road for the length of a football field. The pickup was headed straight for them.

Vann kept his foot pressed on the accelerator to maintain all the power and speed he could. As the truck fishtailed wildly down the edge of the graveyard and Vann fought the wheel to bring it back up onto the road, he could see the guerrillas closest to him scatter to avoid being run over. Two of the Vietcong, both armed with Thompson submachine guns, were calmer than their fellows. They stood where they were and went on shooting. After he had wrestled the truck back onto the road and was hurtling through the ambush position, Vann stared at the second of the two submachine gunners. The man did not shoot at the engine or the tires. Instead, he looked directly at Vann, behind the wheel, and kept firing short bursts from the Thompson to try to kill him.

The bullets from the last burst, as the truck passed the guerrilla, came through the open window and passed in front of Vann's face, one bullet smashing its way back out through a corner of the windshield on the far side of the cab. The truck plunged off the road again, this time into the cemetery on the right, apparently when the guerrillas shot out a tire. Vann fought the vehicle back onto the tarmac once more and thought he was free of the ambush. Then he heard a new burst of firing from behind. He turned to see three more guerrillas shooting at him. They were probably a second element of the ambush party who had been overconfident about the skill of the main group and had relaxed their readiness enough for him to dash past before they could begin firing.

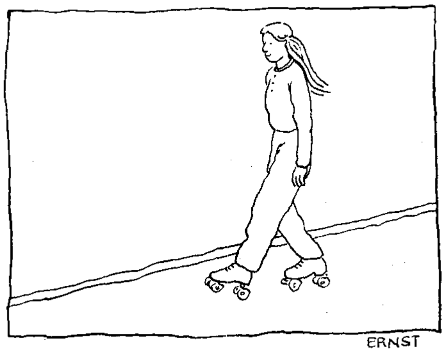
He was still going so fast that he had to brake hard at a police checkpoint half a mile down the road. One of the policemen came running up to the truck with a first-aid kit, but, as far as Vann could tell, his only wounds were scores of tiny cuts from bits of flying glass on his right arm and hand, which had been holding the top of the steering wheel, and on his head and on his chest where his open shirt formed a V. He indicated fifteen guerrillas to the policemen by flashing his hands. They nodded. From their sentry box they had been able to see the last three guerrillas shooting at him. Vann drove the remaining four and a half miles to Cu Chi riding on the rim of the wheel with the blown tire.

The ambush had not occurred by chance. There was only one vehicle in Hau Nghia painted canary yellow. The smile and the goodbye wave from the guerrilla who had decided to leave Vann to the ambush party and the fact that the ambushers opened fire as soon as they sighted the pickup showed that they had been after him or Ramsey. He guessed that he was the target, because he was the senior man and Hau Nghia was so thickly populated with informers that the guerrillas would have had little trouble learning about his appointments and guessing his likely route that morning. He could never prove it, but he suspected that he had been set up by the contractor or the Cu Chi district chief, whose graft from building materials he had also begun to pinch. He was sure the two men were involved in contraband dealings with the guerrillas or were paying the Vietcong a percentage of their graft as protection money, or both. It would have been a simple matter for either man to request his death, and the best surmise was that the request came from the contractor. The man was to play both sides during a subsequent career as a Saigon newspaper publisher and politician, and in 1965 probably had better lines to the Vietcong in Hau Nghia than the district chief had. He certainly had more reason to want Vann dead. Hanh cancelled the last of the man's contracts the day after the ambush.

Vann did not change his driving habits, but he did change the color of the pickup. He had it repainted blue. He had lived, he knew, because of his accidental swerve into the ambushers and because they had been such poor shots. Even the calm submachine gunners had fired from the hip in gangster-movie style instead of taking aim.

JOHN VANN thought that with the blood of American soldiers about to be shed in large quantities, their leaders in Saigon and Washington might feel compelled to face up at last to the failings of the Saigon regime and to the "mistakes of the past twenty years," as he wrote in a ten-page proposal called "Harnessing the Revolution in South Vietnam" that he began to circulate in September of 1965. The idea was to gain the sympathy of the peasants by capturing the social revolution from the Communists and harnessing it to the American cause. The short-range goal was to use this peasant support to destroy the Vietcong. The long-range goal was to foster the creation of a different kind of government in Saigon—"a national government . . . responsive to the dynamics of the social revolution," a South Vietnamese government that could endure after the American soldiers had fought and the survivors had gone home.

United States policy in South Vietnam had been blind and destructive, Vann noted, because, ironically, Americans had been inhibited by their image of themselves as a people who opposed colonialism and championed self-determination. "Apparently, for fear of tarnishing our own image, we have refused to become overtly involved in the internal affairs of governing to the extent necessary to insure the emergence of a government responsive to a majority of its people," he wrote. "It is a scathing indictment of our political awareness that we have sat idly by while many patriotic and non-Communist Vietnamese were literally forced to ally themselves with a Communist-dominated movement in the belief that it was their only chance to secure a better government."



Vann made a plea in his paper to leave the Vietnamese peasants in their homes and on the land they cherished, so that the United States could win their allegiance by bettering their lives and could reconquer the countryside through them. He was alarmed by a tendency among the American military to think, like Colonel Chinh, the commander of the 25th Division in Hau Nghia, that a quicker and more certain method was to empty the countryside by driving the peasants into refugee camps around the district towns—in effect, simply to blow away Mao Zedong's "sea" of people in which the guerrilla fish swam.

Undaunted by the impenetrable fantasies of Paul Harkins, by Maxwell Taylor's lack of curiosity at a lunch briefing in Saigon in September, 1962, by the cancellation of a scheduled briefing for the Joint Chiefs of Staff on July 8, 1963, Vann set out once more to persuade his superiors to fight the war in Vietnam his way. While this time he thought at first that he was receiving encouragement from men in influential positions, his efforts soon came to naught. General Westmoreland, Harkins' successor, eventually received a copy of Vann's proposal, apparently when the final draft was circulated by Charles Mann, the director of USOM. The commanding general did not react favorably to Vann's main argument. "No one better understood the Vietnamese than John Vann," Westmoreland wrote in his memoirs, in 1976, "but he had an affinity for sounding off to the press, particularly on the theory that the United States should assume overall command in the manner of the French." Nor did the general perceive any practical use for the individual ideas in Vann's proposal. Westmoreland's intention was to return the country gradually to the Saigon regime after his American forces had wiped out the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese Army units being sent to the South. He felt no great need for his Saigon allies to help accomplish this task. He wanted to use the best of the Saigon soldiery—the paratroops and the marines, and, occasionally, one of the ordinary ARVN divisions—as adjuncts to the operations of his United States troops. Otherwise, he cared little about them.

IN October, Charles Mann told Vann that he would be leaving Hau Nghia at the end of the month. He was promoting him to a more important field position: USOM representative and adviser on civilian affairs to Major General (soon to be Lieutenant General) Jonathan Seaman, the commander of all United States forces in the III Corps area, which covered the eleven provinces that ringed Saigon from the west to the north and east. Seaman was in the process of bringing the 1st Infantry Division, "the Big Red One," into South Vietnam. He was going to combine it with the 173rd Airborne Brigade, which had already arrived, to start forming a United States Army corps to subdue the Vietcong in the eleven-province region. Vann's job would be to advise Seaman on anything affecting the population and to act as a liaison officer between the province governments and the USOM advisers in each province.

When Vann took the III Corps job, he found a new companion for his excursions into the countryside. Daniel Ellsberg, a Harvard graduate, had done high-level policy planning, first at the Rand Corporation, in Santa Monica, California, and then at the Defense Department in Washington. He had also spent nearly three years in the Marine Corps. After the United States troop buildup began, in mid-1965, he inquired about assignment to Vietnam as a Marine company commander. He was told that there would be objections to permitting a man with his sensitive clearances to run the risk of capture that a company commander faced. He managed to get to Vietnam in a civilian position. A three-day visit with Vann in October of 1965 converted Ellsberg to fervid enthusiasm for Vann's social-revolution strategy.

Vann and Ellsberg were the odd couple—difficult men from different worlds, satisfying complementary needs. There was no feeling of competition between the two, and they became best friends. Ellsberg saw Vann as supreme in the realm of action. Vann saw Ellsberg as the brightest man he had ever met. Vann later said that Ellsberg had "the most brilliant mind ever exposed to the realities of Vietnam." He showed his poor-Southern-boy feeling of inferiority in the way he expressed his esteem for Ellsberg's academic accomplishments. To people who didn't know Ellsberg he would invariably refer to his friend as "Dr. Dan Ellsberg." Vann was flattered that a man like Ellsberg accepted his ideas, and he hoped that Ellsberg might succeed someday in promoting them and him. After all, Ellsberg was actually on a first-name basis with those who sat next to power in Washington. But Vann's liking for Dan Ellsberg went beyond calculations of self-interest. He enjoyed Ellsberg's company, and Ellsberg was prepared to go wherever John Vann would take him.

Ellsberg discovered what a true companion spirit he had found one weekend in December, 1965, during a long, dangerous trip with Vann in a four-wheel-drive International Scout to the remote province capital of Ham Tan. During one part of the trip, the road began to pass through some of the densest rain forest Ellsberg was ever to see in Vietnam. He knew precisely what to do. Vann had trained him during their previous expeditions. He glanced down at his side to be sure a grenade was handy and lifted the carbine he had been cradling in his lap so that he could immediately open fire out the window. Vann started driving with one hand. With the other he raised the M-16 automatic rifle he now customarily carried to be ready to shoot out his side. Ellsberg wondered how they were going to shoot if they did encounter guerrillas. Years of neglect, because of the war, had allowed the rain forest to encroach until the road was only wide enough for one vehicle to pass. The forest was so dense Ellsberg had the feeling that if he stuck his arm out the window, the undergrowth would snatch it. Then the road began to twist through blind curves. Ellsberg decided that if his seven-year-old daughter had an automatic weapon she could ambush a whole regiment on this one-way track through the jungle.

As the road worsened and they made

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their preparations for action, Vann and Ellsberg kept up a conversation. Keeping up a conversation was important to them. They were enjoying the self-control and sharpening of the senses they felt in the presence of danger.

At Ham Tan, there was a final moment to savor. They pulled up in front of the building where the province advisers lived and went in and introduced themselves. One of the young officers noticed the Scout parked outside. He did a double take. He looked at Vann and Ellsberg, at the Scout, and then back at Vann and Ellsberg.

"Did you people drive here?" he asked.

They said yes as casually as they could.

"Is that road open?" another adviser asked, astounded.

"Well, it is now," Vann said.

They were the first Americans to drive to Ham Tan in nearly a year.

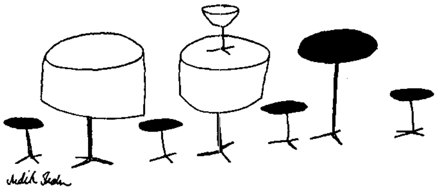
VANN liked to confide details of his sexual exploits to Ellsberg. He was also inclined to be candid about other personal relationships and about his past. "I'm only married in name," he explained to Ellsberg. He said that while he respected Mary Jane he had no special feeling for her—that they had nothing in common anymore. He also told Ellsberg about the statutory-rape episode, and how, despite his staving off a court-martial, he would be barred forever from promotion to general.

In Vietnam, Vann could indulge his sexual proclivities with an abandon that would have destroyed him professionally in the United States or on any normal foreign assignment. Ellsberg was not alone among Vann's friends in noticing that when Vann was in Saigon he often made love to two or three young women in a day. After his last assignation in the evening, he would settle down to the night's work of reading reports and writing memos, concentrating well and writing quickly into the early hours of the morning.

In addition to these casual romps, Vann formed enduring liaisons with two Vietnamese women and managed, with considerable agility, to keep each woman ignorant of the other's existence for years. He spotted Lee (the nickname he gave his first mistress) on a Friday afternoon in November, 1965, about three weeks after he left Hau Nghia. She was standing on the sidewalk in front of her family's house on a main thoroughfare in Saigon, waiting to hail a cab for the afternoon and evening teaching sessions of an English-language school she had started. He offered her a ride, and when she accepted he was astonished to discover that she spoke fluent English. He had thought she was a student, for she was dressed simply and wore her long black hair down over her shoulders. She was five days short of twenty-one at the time—about two years older than his daughter, Patricia. He was forty-one. During the short drive to her school, he asked if she would like to have dinner with him on Sunday night. She saw the wedding ring on his hand but said yes anyway. The wedding ring was gone when he met her Sunday evening. He was wearing only a Rutgers class ring that he never took off. She was not to see the wedding ring again. Over dinner and dancing at a fashionable night club, he told her that he and his wife had separated four years before and he was looking for someone to fall in love with and marry. She asked his age, and he said he was thirty-six. Her twenty-first birthday was that Wednesday, she said, and she intended to take the day off to celebrate. He said he would take the day off, too. They spent the day together, and that evening they made love.

Lee's family was one that had prospered in French Cochinchina. Her grandfather had been a finance minister in the early nineteen-fifties and again under Diem and had headed the National Bank for a while. Her father had served in the Sûreté Générale before 1954 and had then taken a position at the bank. When Lee finished high school, she wanted some financial independence and was enterprising, so she opened her English-language school. By the time she met Vann she had about fifty full-time students and was earning an excellent living.

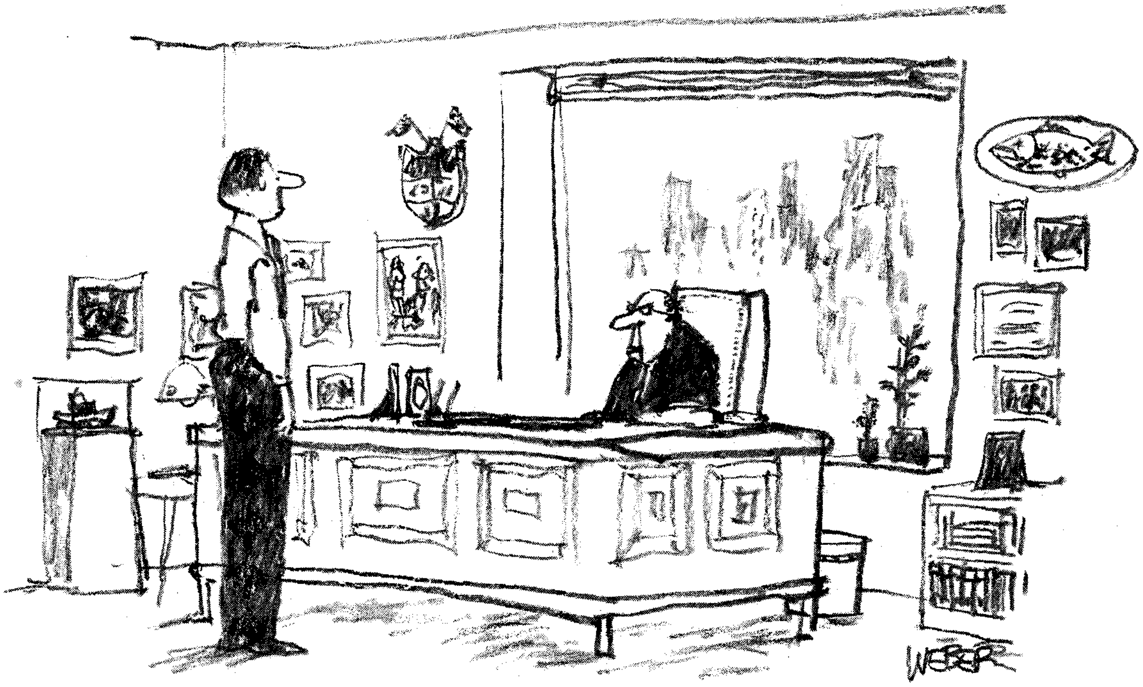
Lee began to suspect after a while that Vann might be cheating on her. Her suspicion was correct. In the spring of 1966, just five months after he'd met Lee, Vann started an affair with a young woman he called Julie, who was to become not only his second Vietnamese mistress but the mother of his child. Vann encountered her at the Vietnamese-American Association, where she was studying English. She was a romantically inclined vacationing lycée student who had never gone out on a date. Julie was seventeen—two years younger than Vann's daughter. She accepted his offer of a ride home. In the car, he told her that he was married but had separated from his wife.



In July, Julie went back to her lycée, at the mountain resort of Dalat, but she was too preoccupied with Vann to study. She came home in September for the funeral of a grandmother and refused to return to Dalat. She announced that she was going to find a job in Saigon. Her father, a well-educated man, was devastated. She was his first child, and he was ambitious for her. Hers was also a family of means. Vann encouraged her to quit school and stay in Saigon. Everything he said and did reinforced her conviction that he fully returned her love.

Julie's father had Vann investigated and learned that he was a womanizer with a wife and family. He waited for Vann and Julie to return to her house one evening. As Vann got out of the car, her father walked over and slapped Vann across the face. "What's wrong with you?" Julie's father shouted. "Don't you have any sense of responsibility? Don't you know you can be sued for seducing a teen-ager?" Vann made no attempt to defend himself physically. He said that he wanted to explain. "There's nothing to explain," Julie's father said. "You stay away from my daughter!" He slapped Julie across the face and ordered her into the house.

Vann behaved as he never would have dared in the United States. He kept seeing Julie and making love to her. In the future, he avoided getting his face slapped again by dropping her off a block from the house. Whenever he called to set up a rendezvous and Julie's father happened to pick up the phone, he would curse at Vann—to no avail. Julie's father was too ashamed to take the only practical recourse open to him—complaining to the American authorities. He tried reasoning with his daughter, but reason had no effect. He turned to physical measures. Their house was surrounded by a wall, and he locked the gate and took away her key, to force her to stay home at night. She climbed over the wall. Vann would be waiting outside to lift her down to the street. In his rage and despair, Julie's father started to beat her when she came back. As soon as she could arrange another tryst with Vann, she would climb over the wall again and return to take her beating.



"I want you to nose around and see if anybody's trying to emulate my style."

After Vann returned from a home leave in the summer of 1966, he told Lee, who knew by now about his children, that he had tried to persuade Mary Jane to grant him a divorce, so that they could marry, but she was unwilling, and that meant that he would have to beggar himself with huge alimony and child-support payments. Lee said she would wait. The conversation with Mary Jane had not taken place. Maintaining the form of an American marriage and family was important to Vann's self-image of respectability, and he thought it enhanced his AID personnel record. It had also become important to him as the perfect excuse for avoiding permanent ties in Vietnam.

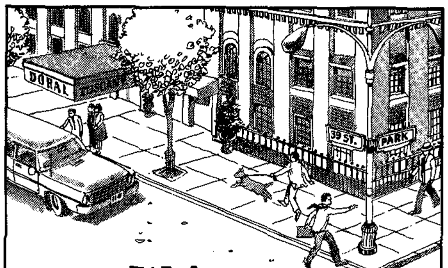
Julie got pregnant in late 1966 and wanted to have the baby. Vann talked her into an abortion. It was physically and emotionally painful for her. Afterward, she told Vann she did not want to go through another one, but he did not encourage her to adopt contraceptive measures. Lee had two abortions as a result of their affair before she began to practice contraception on her own initiative. Vann apparently assumed that he could persuade Julie to have another abortion if she got pregnant again. Pregnancy was a woman's problem as far as he was concerned.

Julie got pregnant again at the beginning of April, 1967, and refused to have a second abortion. She told Vann she could not face the trauma she had endured after the first one. She said that people in love should accept the consequences of their love: the consequence of theirs was a baby. Vann tried as hard as he could to persuade her to abort the child. She responded that her pregnancy was an opportunity for him to do what he wanted to do—turn the legal separation from Mary Jane into a divorce so that he could marry a woman he loved. He gave her the line he had composed for Lee, about how he was financially chained to Mary Jane.

When Vann tried to abandon Julie, her father wouldn't let him. He confronted Vann right in his office, and coerced him into an arrangement that Julie wanted. If Vann would promise to provide a house for Julie and to support her and the child in the manner to which she was accustomed, her father would not complain to the American Ambassador, Ellsworth Bunker. Vann would also have to go through a ceremony with her in front of the family to lend the union a semblance of respectability. Vann, in agreeing, saw himself as having been blackmailed.

Julie became none the wiser about Lee and Lee none the wiser about Julie. Nothing changed that Lee would have noticed. Lee was Vann's public mistress, the one he took to diplomatic receptions in Saigon and to other social occasions as the official attitude toward bringing Vietnamese paramours to these events gradually relaxed. Vann had always been careful not to flaunt Julie in Saigon, and after her second pregnancy and the arrangement with her father, he never let himself be seen in public with her. She spent most of her time in a house that AID rented for Vann in the Saigon suburb of Gia Dinh. (He was legally entitled to the house as part of his official allowance.) Only close friends of his, like Ellsberg, knew about her.

DESPITE repeated bureaucratic scrapes after his return to Vietnam in 1965 and his dissent from General Westmoreland's war-of-attrition strategy, Vann's organizational brilliance and his accumulated expertise brought him continued promotion. In May, 1967, President Johnson sent Robert Komer to Saigon to serve as Westmoreland's deputy for pacification and to establish a unique civil-military pacification service that was to be known by the acronym CORDS, for Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support. The military advisers to the Regional and Popular Forces and the civilian advisers in the provinces were merged into unified province teams. The teams reported directly to a deputy commander for pacification in each corps region, who in turn reported to Komer. Vann was appointed the Dep/CORDS for



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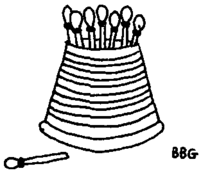
III Corps. He now had eight hundred Americans working for him at the headquarters he established at Bien Hoa and in the unified province teams, mostly military men. Add the Filipino and South Korean help and the Vietnamese employees and he had about twenty-two hundred people under him. American soldiers—lieutenant colonels, majors, captains, lieutenants, sergeants—were once again taking orders from John Vann. "I am back in the military fold and I am in command," he said in a round-robin letter to his friends.

Vann spoke to Robert McNamara, the Secretary of Defense, alone for the first time in July, 1967, when McNamara flew out to bargain Westmoreland down on his latest request for more American troops. He spoke to McNamara for only half an hour, but the fact that the Secretary had sought Vann's opinion on the war was an indication that McNamara, to his credit, had become frightened.



The failure of the air war against the North had first opened McNamara's eyes. The bombs of Rolling Thunder did not stop or substantially reduce the flow of men and equipment from the North into the South, any more than they weakened the will of the Vietnamese. Rather, as the bombs hardened the Vietnamese will, so they also goaded the Vietnamese into building a transportation system that could carry more each year and that became, each year, less vulnerable to air attack. The Ho Chi Minh Trail sketched by the C.I.A. cartographers at the beginning of 1965 was a faint skein of Montagnard trails and washed-out dirt roads dating from the colonial era, with only parts of it drivable, and then only in the dry season. Eight years later, the Agency's map of the Trail was to show thousands of miles of all-weather roads, surfaced with crushed rock and laterite or corduroyed with logs where the local soil could not be compacted enough to hold, and bridged at the creeks and rivers. The roads swirled from the North down through the mountains of Laos and into the South in a rain-forest highway grid of double loops and triple bypasses.

In all the years of the air war, the planes of the United States Air Force and the Navy did not destroy more than twenty to twenty-five per cent of the trucks rolling down to sustain the battlegrounds of the South. The North Vietnamese also managed to keep their railroads operating, although at times they had to resort to using sections of the lines as cargo shuttles for the trucks. The average loss to aircraft of troops sent to the South was well under twenty per cent, because the men marched through the most dangerous areas to better avoid the planes. An infiltration group tended to lose between ten and twenty per cent of its men along the way, but mainly from sickness and desertion.

Airmen have never been able to wage a successful interdiction campaign, because they are confronted with an insoluble dilemma. It is composed of time and distance compounded by weather, anti-aircraft defenses, and the ingenuity and determination of those other human beings, on the ground, whom they are trying to kill. The number of planes is always limited, and so is the time they can stay in the air. In 1967, the United States could put about three hundred strike aircraft over North Vietnam and Laos on an average day and keep each there an average of about half an hour. The Vietnamese transportation network ran all the way down from the Chinese border. With a limited number of planes and a limited time to strike, it was impossible to subject enough of the roads and rail lines to surveillance and attack a sufficient number of hours in twenty-four to have a decisive impact. A lot of the trucks escaped simply because no aircraft happened to be overhead while they were moving. Indo-Chinese weather compounded the time and distance problem by forcing planes to sit idle on airfields and on the decks of carriers when they should have been striking, and then often limiting what the pilots could see when they were on the attack.

What the North Vietnamese did with head and hand was the greatest compounder of the time and distance problem. The Communist leaders marshalled a force of three hundred thousand men and women to work full time at repairing the roads and rails and bridges and at continuously expanding the network. Two hundred thousand additional North Vietnamese peasants joined them in this work in what time they could spare from their fields. The

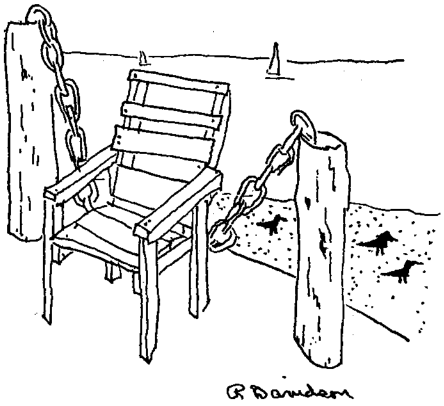
Chinese came to the assistance of the North Vietnamese with roughly forty thousand engineer and anti-aircraft troops to help keep open the two rail lines from the border to Hanoi. The Russians provided bulldozers for the road crews. The principal earth-moving equipment, however, was a type more familiar in Vietnam: pick and shovel; a wheelbarrow that rolled better than the American model because it had bicycle wheels on the sides; and, if no wheelbarrow was available to move earth, then two baskets, one slung at each end of a pole balanced on the shoulder.

One tends to think of a road or a trail as a line going from Point A to Point B, curving only as is necessary to accommodate terrain. The North Vietnamese wanted a "chokeproof" road system, so they built six or eight or ten different routes from A to B, often with pontoon bridges at the crossing points which were removed at dawn and towed back into place at dusk. When the planes cut a road by cratering it with bombs, or knocked out a bridge, the trucks shifted to an alternative route while repairs were carried out. The multiplicity of routes also permitted the convoys to make themselves scarcer targets by dispersing. The drivers camouflaged their trucks with foliage, of course, and there were pull-off points everywhere in which they could hide at an aircraft alert. The North Vietnamese camouflaged long stretches of road, too. They tied the trees together overhead or suspended big trellises of bamboo covered with brush and freshly cut boughs.

The pilots exacted punishment. Driving a truck year in, year out with twenty or twenty-five or perhaps thirty per cent odds of mortality was not a military occupation conducive to retirement on pension. And a man or a woman on a road crew could have an assignment as dangerous as an infantryman's. To keep the roads open, the crews had to stay close to them, and closest of all to the segments most frequently bombed. Bombs that missed trucks and bridges often hit people. Crews were caught in the flares of night raids. It was impossible for them to do their job and shift as often as they should to avoid the carpets laid by the B-52s in Laos and in the Panhandle of North Vietnam. Today, the memorial cemetery for those who died for the Ho Chi Minh Trail covers almost forty acres and holds the headstones of 10,306 Vietnamese men and women. Their names had been recorded. Thousands of others who died for the Trail remained where they perished, unnoted in the confusion of war.

Yet to punish was not to prevail. Each double loop and triple bypass in this ever-enlarging whirligig of roads meant more mileage for the American pilots to cover. The Vietnamese Communists estimated that when finished the Ho Chi Minh Trail comprised about nine thousand six hundred miles of all-weather and secondary roadway.

In 1966, the Joint Chiefs had told McNamara and President Johnson that it was possible to stop the trucks by shutting off most of the gasoline. All that had to be done was to bomb the principal tank farm at the port of Haiphong and the other bulk POL (the military term for "petroleum, oil, and lubricants") storage facilities, mainly in the Hanoi-Haiphong area. On June 29, 1966, bombers left the Haiphong receiving facilities and tank farm in flames. Within a month, nearly eighty per cent of the known bulk POL storage capacity of North Vietnam was gone, including a number of small sites, which had been harder to hit. As far as can be determined, not a single truck ran out of gas. Furthermore, the number of Russian-model trucks supplied to the Vietnamese by the Soviet Union, the Eastern European countries, and China kept rising through 1966, and by the end of the year there were twice as many as there had been in 1965. The North Vietnamese, who produced no oil and refined no gasoline themselves, had anticipated the raids and had long before dispersed in underground tanks and in concealed stacks of barrels enough gasoline, diesel fuel, and lubricating oil to meet their needs. In the future, they had the Russians ship them much of the POL poured into barrels ahead of time, so that it could be dispersed immediately on arrival. To facilitate refuelling the trucks, they began the construction of two pipelines down the Panhandle and into Laos, with spur lines branching off where they would be useful. Three of the spurs eventually reached into South Vietnam. One of the commemorative statues in the memorial cemetery of the Ho Chi Minh Trail is a figure of a woman operating a gasoline pump.



BY August, 1967, the amphetamine-like effect on John Vann of his elevation to Dep/CORDS for III Corps had worn off and reality was crowding in on him again. Westmoreland's attrition strategy was not destroying the North Vietnamese Army and the Main Force Vietcong units, and although the Americans had got themselves organized for pacification, they were not accomplishing anything of substance with their Vietnamese allies. Corruption, incompetence, and maladministration were worse than ever on the Saigon side. Westmoreland's claim of growing security was a mirage. Dan Ellsberg had gone back to the Rand Corporation in Santa Monica, California, at the end of May, ill with hepatitis and disheartened by his own inability to persuade anyone in power to adopt the radical measures he and Vann thought were necessary to win the war. "I think we are on the road to doom," Vann wrote to his friend on August 19th.

In mid-November, Vann left for an eight-week leave in Europe and the United States, the longest he had ever taken since his return. He was more discouraged than ever about the course of the war. Palmer Hoyt, the editor and publisher of the Denver *Post*, tried to arrange for him to see President Johnson. Vann got as far as the White House basement office of Walt Rostow, Johnson's special assistant for national-security affairs. Toward the end of the half-hour briefing, Rostow asked Vann if he did not agree that, despite the flaws he claimed to see, the United States would be over the worst of the war in six months.

"Oh, hell, no, Mr. Rostow," Vann said. "I'm a born optimist. I think we can hold out longer than that."

Rostow remarked that a man with Vann's attitude should not be working for the United States government in Vietnam.

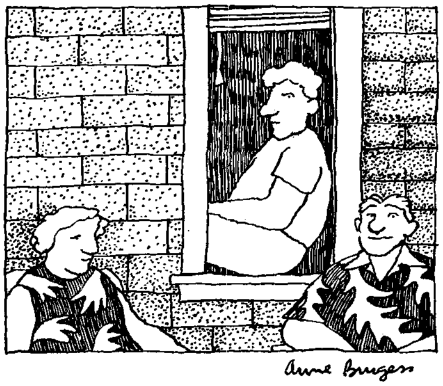
Vann's Vietnamese daughter was born in Saigon the day after Christmas, 1967, while he was in Littleton, Colorado, with Mary Jane and his American family. Because of the agreement with Vann, the space for the name of the father was left blank on the child's birth certificate, but Julie alluded to him in the Vietnamese name she put on the certificate—Thuy Van. The allusion was more direct in an informal European name that she gave the little girl, by which she would always be called—Paula.

John Vann got back to Bien Hoa in early January and found Lieutenant-General Fred Weyand, the United States Army commander for the III Corps region, a worried man. Vann and Weyand had become friends in 1966, after Weyand had brought the 25th Infantry Division to Vietnam from Hawaii, and they trusted each other. Westmoreland's campaign plan for 1968 called for Weyand to have most of his infantry and armor battalions out in the rain forests along the Cambodian border by the end of January when Tet, the Vietnamese Lunar New Year holiday, began. But Weyand's intelligence showed that the N.V.A. and Vietcong Main Force units were leaving their bases near the frontier, or across it, and infiltrating down into the populated provinces closer to Saigon. Weyand was thinking of asking Westmoreland to postpone the start of the campaign. He wanted to keep his troops in the interior of III Corps in order to be able to react to attacks. Vann urged him to do so. Westmoreland agreed to Weyand's request.

At 3 A.M. on January 31, 1968, the second day of Tet, Vann was asleep with Lee in his bedroom in a house he shared with his deputy near his CORDS headquarters at Bien Hoa. He woke to the thunderclaps of 122-mm. rockets and 82-mm. mortars slamming into Bien Hoa Air Base and into nearby Long Binh, where Weyand's command post was located. Installations in cities and towns all over South Vietnam were under assault. The bulk of an N.V.A. division had stormed into Hue. Fifteen Vietcong battalions—about six thousand Communist troops—had moved into Saigon and its suburbs. Attacks were under way against the American Embassy, the ARVN Joint General Staff headquarters, and Tan Son Nhut. Vann dressed in a frenzy, telling Lee that he had to go to the CORDS compound and she could not come with him. The house was the safest place for her, he said. She should stay in the bedroom and hide in the wardrobe if any Vietcong broke inside.

Vann became so preoccupied with rallying his CORDS teams in the provinces that he did not take his helicopter to Gia Dinh to rescue Julie and his infant daughter until the afternoon. By that time the house was ringed with gunfire between the Vietcong and the province Regional Force troops. The pilot dropped Vann at the province headquarters, and, armed with an M-16, he slipped, on foot through the guerrillas. He instructed the pilot to orbit above the house and be prepared at his signal to plummet and snatch up Julie and the child. Vann found the house empty. No one answered his shouts. Stray bursts from automatic weapons were ripping through the windows on the second floor. As he was walking back to the province center, he and a guerrilla bumped into each other. Vann killed the man.

Julie's parents had beaten Vann to the rescue. They drove to Gia Dinh at first light, were forced to leave the car at a roadblock near the central market, and walked a mile and a quarter to the house. They arrived as Julie and a maid were about to flee with the baby. It took the family most of the day to reach the parents' home in Saigon. Many streets were mobbed with people attempting to escape the fighting, and everybody was being stopped at one roadblock after another by police and R.F. fearful of more infiltrators. Vann learned that Julie and the child were safe when he arrived at her parents' home. As usual, he wanted to be the hero of the hour, and in the story he told to friends afterward he spirited Julie and the baby away amid guerrilla gunfire. When Julie heard the tale, she did not contradict him.



Fred Weyand was convinced afterward that if he had not held back his battalions the Vietnamese Communists would have overwhelmed the weak South Vietnamese forces in the capital and seized Saigon. The unforeseen result of Weyand's perceptive caution, and Vann's wisdom in encouraging him, was to prolong an unwinnable conflict. Saigon might be saved, but the war could not be rescued. Westmoreland had lost it. By Christmas, 1967, "the Green Machine," as the American soldiers had so aptly named the Army of this war, had demanded and been given 841,264 draftees, and the draft call in January, 1968, was for thirty-three thousand more young men. Almost twenty thousand Americans had died in Vietnam and more than fifty thousand others had been wounded seriously enough to be hospitalized. The financial cost had reached thirty-three billion dollars a year, provoking a rate of inflation that was beginning to seriously disturb the economy. College and university campuses were in a turmoil of antiwar protest. The human and financial costs of Westmoreland's war of attrition were so high that they were bound to provoke a psychological collapse and a domestic political crisis of historic proportions once the surprise Tet Offensive exposed his claim of forthcoming victory as an illusion.

On March 31, 1968, Lyndon Johnson went on television to announce that he would restrict the bombing of North Vietnam and that he would not run for another term as President, in order to hold the nation together in the few months he had left. Three days later, the North Vietnamese surprised the President again. Radio Hanoi announced that they would negotiate with the Americans.

JOHN VANN could not accept the death of the war. He could not admit that Tet had written finis to it. His inability to do so transformed him in the years that lay ahead. He had grasped at Tet as a rationale for continuing. The price of the political and psychological victory that the Vietnamese Communists achieved was the destruction of the Vietcong. Except in the northern I Corps and parts of the Central Highlands, the guerrillas were the force employed at Tet, because they could most easily maneuver into the cities and towns. The result was that tens of thousands perished during the original Tet attacks and more in a second offensive against the urban centers, which the Hanoi leaders ordered in May to keep the pressure on the Johnson Administration. The replacements were almost all North Vietnamese. The clandestine Vietcong government could not possibly replace losses rapidly enough from its shrunken recruiting base, and demoralization was widespread within the guerrilla movement that remained. The Vietcong fighters did not see the will-breaking effect that their sacrifice had in the United States. They saw only the loss of their comrades on missions that by May had become so unrealistic in military terms as to be suicidal.

While Tet savaged the reputations of men like Westmoreland, whom Johnson relieved and brought home to be Chief of Staff of the Army, it vindicated Vann's realism. His credibility within the bureaucracy and among the journalists grew greater than ever. A friend sent him a sample of the remarks being made in the upper reaches of the Pentagon and the State Department about the briefings he had given to others besides Rostow: "Nothing that John said turned out to be an exaggeration." Furthermore, Tet put Vann in his element. He had once said to Ellsberg in Hau Nghia that he harped on the failings of the ARVN and the Saigon regime "because everyone else is singing a merry tune," and that "if they were all discouraged, I would be saying, 'Look, it's not hopeless; here's what can be done.' " He was appalled by the turning loose of American firepower on the cities and towns. Twitchy-fingered ARVN and United States soldiers doubled the risk of driving the roads and flying in and out of province and district centers at night, yet bullets from any direction galvanized Vann. He was all over the corps, encouraging his CORDS teams, preparing to hit back. As early as the third week of February, he sent a pep-talk memo around to his teams:

> Now is the time, quite literally, to separate the men from the boys. I have been disappointed in several instances to find advisors who are obviously feeling sorry for themselves and mentally wringing their hands. . . . Get your counterparts and their troops out from behind their barbed wire and aggressively on the offensive, both day and night. The enemy has never been more vulnerable to effective military action than he is today.

Vann seized on the devastation of the guerrillas as the turn that could bring victory to the United States and the Saigon side. He quickly convinced himself that the North Vietnamese Army could not take up the entire burden that the guerrillas had been carrying and win the war by itself. In his judgment, the long-term threat to the existence of the Saigon regime was the Vietcong, with its capacity for political as well as military action. He tended to view the N.V.A. as a physical force that could be contained. And now the guerrilla movement had been so severely weakened that he decided it could be ground down further and contained, too.

On the basis of these assumptions, Vann devised a new plan for winning the war. He wanted to "pacify the main stream of the American public" with "a phased reduction" of United States forces while gradually transferring to the ARVN responsibility for combat with the N.V.A. and those Vietcong regulars who remained.

Tet also made his plan feasible, Vann persuaded himself, because the blow must have jolted many within the Saigon government into a realization that they could not continue to tolerate the extent of the regime's corruption and incompetence. The Communists had inadvertently created an atmosphere in which American pressure to curb these ills might at last have an effect. A phased reduction of United States troops "would provide the necessary stimulus" to the South Vietnamese to move seriously in this direction, Vann wrote to Edward Kennedy, one of the first political figures to whom he tried to sell his plan.

He failed to convince Dan Ellsberg. They had long discussions about the Tet offensive and Vann's new plan when Vann was in the United States for three weeks in July. To Ellsberg, Tet had brought despair rather than hope of renewal. The shock had provoked him into a reëxamination of the war.

IN November, 1968, Vann composed a six-and-a-half-page letter, which he knew would be passed to President-elect Richard Nixon through an intermediary. He described in detail his plan for a phased pullout and made a bid to

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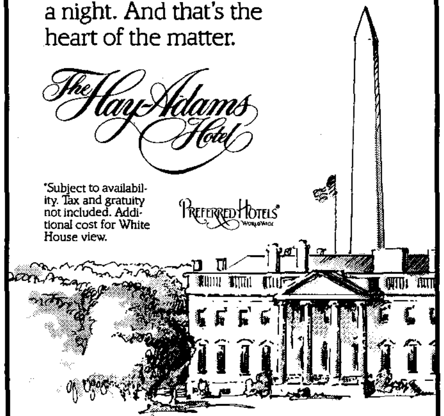

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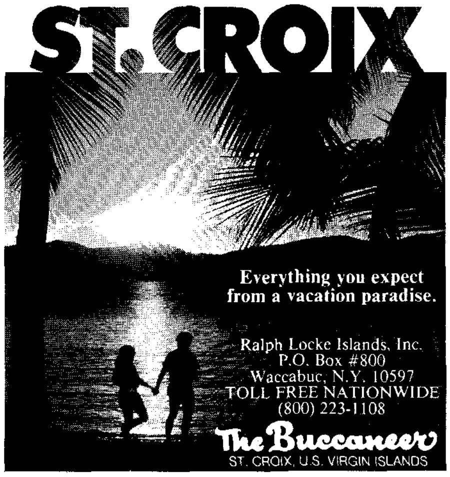

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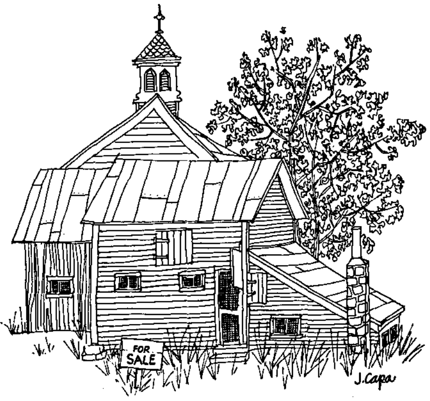
join the new Administration temporarily as a high-level adviser to supervise the carrying out of the strategy. "The old problems of corruption, nepotism, and nonresponsiveness to rural needs . . . are as much with us as ever," Vann wrote, but he indicated that he had changed his mind about their importance. They did not matter so much, because of the altered circumstances brought about by Tet. It was folly, he said, to try to trade American soldiers for Asian ones "in the overpopulated Orient." Using Vietnamese soldiers to fight would also help calm the American public because they were far cheaper in dollars, Vann went on, pointing out that most of the thirty-three billion dollars spent annually on the war was being spent on the United States forces. "I think we could be eminently successful in South Vietnam at a cost of around five billion a year by 1975," he wrote.

Vann received no invitation to join the Nixon Administration as a high-level adviser. Exuberance occasionally led him to flights of fancy about his eligibility for exalted Washington office. (He dreamed of one day being rewarded for his Vietnam service with the post of Secretary of the Army, so that he could settle scores with the institution he felt had rejected him.) Vann nevertheless did contribute to the formulation of the Nixon strategy through the letter and through the fact that Henry Kissinger, who was chosen that November to be Nixon's special assistant for national-security affairs, was familiar with Vann's ideas. Vann had managed to convey them to Kissinger during an attempt earlier that year to further himself and his war. He had offered to join Nelson Rockefeller's campaign as its Vietnam expert. His overture became moot with Rockefeller's defeat by Nixon at the Republican National Convention, but in the meantime Kissinger had received copies of Vann's letters to Edward Kennedy and others.

The Nixon strategy soon emerged as "Vietnamization." Kissinger subsequently paid Vann an exaggerated compliment on the extent of his contribution. "It's your policy," he said.

In December of 1969, when Vann was on leave in the United States, Nixon summoned him to the White House. Kissinger introduced Vann to the President with unstinting praise, and the President seemed genuinely to want to listen to what Vann had to say. "I will not be the first President of the United States to lose a war," Nixon had said to the Republican congressional leaders that fall. He talked with Vann for nearly an hour. After Vann briefed him on pacification in the Mekong Delta, where Vann had been transferred early in 1969, Nixon questioned him on changes he had seen in the war over the years, seeking to learn how Vann had arrived at his current opinions. "He appeared to accept with some confidence the judgments I gave him as to the now favorable situation," Vann wrote in his memorandum of the conversation. Vann assured the President that with the advantage of heavy weapons and United States airpower the ARVN would be able to handle the N.V.A. when the two armies someday faced off. The worst that could occur, he said, was that the Saigon regime "would have to give up some territory and some population if an all-out conventional invasion took place," but "the invasion would be contained as the enemy extended his supply lines and became vulnerable to bombardment by air and artillery." The President thanked Vann for his service to the country and instructed him to return to Vietnam and keep up the good work. He gave Vann a fountain pen and an autographed golf ball as souvenirs of their meeting.

The thought that he might be caught in the trap of self-fulfilling prophecy for which he had mocked Westmoreland seems never to have occurred to Vann. Dan Ellsberg teased Vann about his meeting with Nixon. "You finally had some good news to give the President, John," he said. Vann did not appreciate the ironic humor. He and Ellsberg remained closest personal friends. During Vann's visits to the United States, they were able to argue about the war for hours without alienating each other, though they stood at opposite poles. The experience of reading the still top-secret Pentagon Papers—the forty-three-volume inquiry into the origins and history of the conflict which McNamara had commissioned, and which had been completed in January of 1969—convinced Ellsberg that the American cause in Indo-China was now and had always been wrongheaded and futile. The Vietnamization policy was thus a "bloody, hopeless, uncompelled, hence surely immoral prolongation of U.S. involvement in this war," Ellsberg wrote to an official of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace that September.



VANN came to regard his trips to the United States as triumphs. Lee had taught him to dress better for them. She persuaded him to buy dark, custom-tailored suits in Hong Kong and to wear soberly striped ties. His lectures at the Army War College and other service schools were treated as major occasions. He did not get to see the President again, but he regularly briefed Melvin Laird, Nixon's Secretary of Defense. Though many of the reporters Vann knew, like David Halberstam, who was in the midst of writing an antiwar book, "The Best and the Brightest," no longer agreed with his conclusions about Vietnam, he retained a special credibility with the press. The credibility came from all he had put in the bank in the past, and because he could still be frank about the flaws on the Saigon side. He kept his credibility within the lower levels of the bureaucracy for the same reasons.

Nixon's Vietnamization was not proving cheap in American lives. During 1969, 11,527 United States servicemen perished in Vietnam. During 1970, 6,065 more were to die. In all, nearly twenty-one thousand Americans were killed in Vietnam during Nixon's Presidency and about fifty-three thousand seriously wounded—more than a third of the total United States casualties in the entire war. Nixon's troop withdrawals did have an unanticipated benefit, however. They prevented the American Army in Vietnam from disintegrating. It had become an Army in which men escaped into marijuana and heroin, and other men died because their comrades were stoned on these drugs that profited the Chinese traffickers and the Saigon generals. It was an Army whose units in the field were on the edge of mutiny, whose soldiers rebelled against the senselessness of their sacrifice by assassinating officers and noncoms in "accidental" shootings and "fraggings" with grenades. The signs of demoralization were evident by the time of Westmoreland's departure, in mid-1968. They worsened under his successor, Creighton Abrams, because Abrams, while he attempted new tactics, continued Westmoreland's attrition strategy and kept pushing American soldiers into killing grounds that the N.V.A. had prepared. In a notorious example in May, 1969, fifty-five men of the 101st Airborne Division died to seize a fortified ridgeline on the edge of the wild A Shau Valley in the mountains west of Hue. The troops named the ridge, which they were quickly ordered to abandon, Hamburger Hill. The sad idiom of the American soldier in Vietnam reflected the futility of his war: a man was not killed there; he was "wasted."

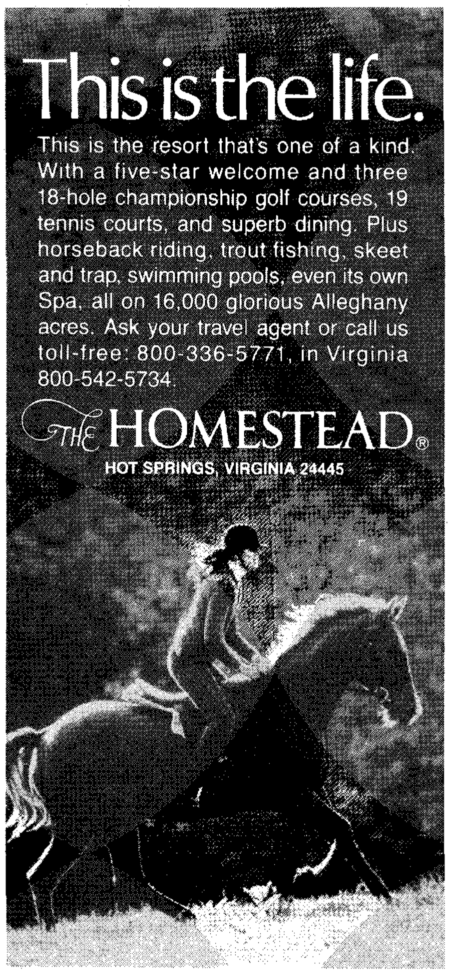
The ARVN did not get better as Vann had persuaded himself it would. Lam Quang Tho, the province chief at My Tho in 1963, who had sabotaged every attempt to unhinge the Vietcong flank at Ap Bac, rose to general and was given command of a division. Nguyen Van Thieu, who had outmaneuvered Ky and become the strongman in Saigon, did not heed the warning of Tet and reform the regime as Vann had also hoped. Thieu and his wife made so many millions that they acquired control of a bank of their own to funnel their graft out of the country.

The John Vann of years past had known that a Saigon government led by moral bankrupts and a Saigon military commanded by incompetents were doomed, and had raged against those who spent Vietnamese and American lives in the false hope of perpetuating them. The John Vann of years past had deceived himself and others without limit to satisfy his personal cravings, but the deceptions had never affected his professional integrity. He had always kept professional truth in a separate compartment of his life, and he had preserved inviolate this central truth about the war. His willingness to hew to this truth had been one of the qualities that made him stand out morally and intellectually from the other major figures of the war. He had never fooled himself about it or fooled those he served. His crusades in Hau Nghia against corruption and for a strategy of social revolution and reform might have been quixotic, but they had been sincerely motivated by the knowledge that to wage war for the status quo was wrong and would fail.

The new John Vann thought differently. The most flagrantly corrupt province chief in the Mekong Delta in 1970 was a cousin of President Thieu's. Vann's solution for getting rid of him was to try (unsuccessfully) to have him made a regimental commander. "He'll steal less with a regiment," Vann explained to the man's American adviser.

By 1970, the John Vann his old friends had known had disappeared into the war. Each year, South Vietnam had become a more nearly perfect place for him. The war satisfied him so completely that he could no longer look at it as something separate from himself. As he had bent lesser truths in the past, he finally bent the truth about the war itself.

ON May 15, 1971, Vann finally received his stars. Creighton Abrams appointed him senior adviser for the II Corps region, which comprised the mountains of the Central Highlands and some old Viet Minh redoubts in the narrow rice deltas of the adjacent provinces of the Central Coast. He was given authority over all United States military forces in the area, along with control of those civilians and military officers assigned to the pacification program. The position made him, in effect, a major general in the United States Army. The appointment was unprecedented in the history of American wars, for Vann was still technically a civilian employed by AID. He could not literally be called a general, even though he held a major general's place and had two metaphorical stars on his shoulders, and so he was called a director, the director of the Second Regional Assistance Group. In addition, Vann covertly shared command of the hundred and fifty-eight thousand Saigon troops in the corps because of a special relationship he had established with Major General Ngo Dzu, the ARVN II Corps commander. The influence Vann now wielded within the United States civil-military bureaucracy and the Saigon-government structure made him the most important American in the country after the Am-



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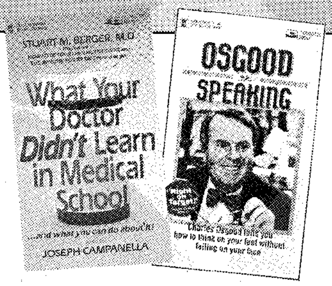

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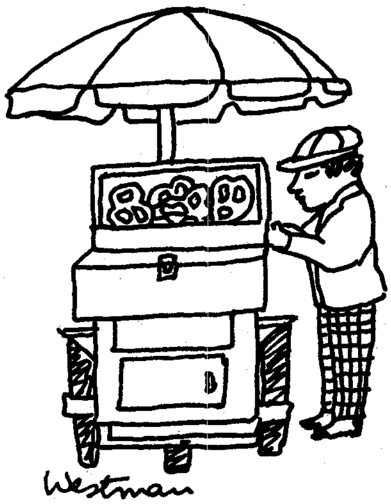
bassador and the commanding general.

In keeping with his new dignity, Vann added a tie to the short-sleeved sports shirt and slacks that were his working uniform. The civilian general did not have long to enjoy his stars before he would be tested. When he went home for Christmas in mid-December of 1971, he arranged with Fred Weyand, who had become Abrams' deputy, to send him an "alert" message in January, so that he would have an excuse to cut short his leave. He expected the N.V.A. to attack in February, and he wanted to be ready.

For the first time in his six years of home leaves, Vann did not sleep at his own house. He ate his meals there, with Mary Jane and the family, and went there for the Christmas celebration, but he slept at the nearby home of Mary Jane's mother and sister. Vann and Mary Jane had been divorced, at her request, in October, 1971. Logically there was no more reason for Mary Jane to want to divorce John Vann in 1971 than there had been in most other years of their quarter century of marriage. He had never ceased to support her and the children, if always stingily. She had also known about his daughter Paula since 1968, when he had, probably deliberately, left in the house a letter from Julie mentioning the child. Mary Jane's response had been to offer to adopt Paula if he would give up the war and return. The accumulated weight of anger and frustration and a feeling that divorce was the only way she could lash out at him had finally driven her to demand one. He had opposed the divorce at first, because the form of a marriage he had with Mary Jane suited him so well, but had then decided he would be better off with his legal freedom from her in exchange for modest alimony and his share of the house. He remained a man who wanted a wife. He was planning to marry Julie. He did not, however, intend to give up Lee. She was shamed and disappointed when he told her of his new marriage plans and of the existence of Paula, but he was gradually training her to accept second place as a permanent mistress. He continued to succeed in keeping Julie ignorant of Lee.

Vann's relationship with Dan Ellsberg had become increasingly complicated. He had been enraged at Ellsberg after the New York *Times* had begun publishing the Pentagon Papers in a series of articles in June, 1971, and Ellsberg had been indicted by the Nixon Administration for theft, conspiracy, and a violation of the espionage statute. He would curse Ellsberg to mutual acquaintances and shout that Ellsberg ought to be thrown into jail for treason. Vann was not angry at Ellsberg's violation of security regulations in photocopying the Rand Corporation copy of the Pentagon history. He was incensed at the assault Ellsberg was attempting on his war. Yet he did not want to forsake the friendship. "Can't say I'm in agreement with your way of making your point—but you sure as hell created a stir," he had written Ellsberg that fall. Six different investigators from four agencies had come to his new headquarters at Pleiku to question him, he said, and he had seen to it that none of them "made his trip worthwhile." He was lying. He apparently coöperated with the investigators. He also passed tips to Kissinger on how the Administration ought to proceed against Ellsberg.

At the beginning of this Christmas home leave, Vann had a long telephone conversation with his friend. Ellsberg described in confidence the defense strategy that his lawyers had developed for his forthcoming trial in Los Angeles. When Vann subsequently flew from Colorado to Washington for his usual round of calls, he stopped at the Pentagon office of J. Fred Buzhardt, who was then general counsel of the Defense Department and subsequently became one of Nixon's lawyers in the Watergate Affair. Buzhardt was gathering information for the prosecution of Ellsberg. Vann spent an hour and a half passing along Ellsberg's defense strategy and suggesting how the Administration might defeat it.



Yet Vann did not intend the game to end as the betrayal of a friend. After the message came from Weyand and he was on his way back to South Vietnam and to battle, he stopped in San Francisco to see Ellsberg. Dan Ellsberg asked Vann to testify for him, because Vann would carry such credibility with a jury. "I'll say anything you want," Vann replied.

JOHN VANN planned to defeat his enemy not by throwing away infantry, as Westmoreland had done in sending men against fortified positions in the wilderness, but by reversing the roles. To win the war, the Vietnamese Communists had to come to him, and when they advanced out of the mountains he would break them on his strong points, as he had seen Walton Walker break the North Koreans on the ramparts of the Pusan Perimeter in 1950. The apparent objective of the N.V.A. offensive in II Corps was Kontum, a garrison and trading center above Pleiku with a population of about twenty-five thousand. It was the capital of the province of that name and was the northernmost town of substance in the Highlands. Kontum was guarded to the north by a regimental base at Tan Canh, on a plateau near the district headquarters of Dak To, twenty-five miles up Route 14, an ascending asphalt ribbon. Just below Tan Canh and to the west of it, a series of ridgelines ran in a north-south direction, parallel to Route 14 and back down toward Kontum. These were known collectively as Rocket Ridge, because they had been the recipients over the years of so many N.V.A. 122-mm. rockets. The United States Army had built a string of fortified artillery positions, called fire-support bases—or fire bases, for short—down Rocket Ridge to shield the road and the northwest approaches to Kontum and had bequeathed these to the ARVN. Before the Vietnamese Communists could attack the town, they would have to overrun Tan Canh or crack the fire-base line along Rocket Ridge.

For the showdown, Hanoi gathered about thirty-five thousand men under one of its best generals, Hoang Minh Thao. He marshalled his troops in the triborder area beyond Tan Canh and Rocket Ridge where Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam meet. The N.V.A. made its preparations boldly on this occasion. Sound travels far in the mountains at night, and light can be seen a long way off. The advisers on the fire bases could hear the bulldozers of the N.V.A. engineers widening the old French tracks and cutting new roads, and they could see the headlights of the trucks hauling food and ammunition and towing artillery into position. On March 30, 1972, in a general assault that the Americans later called the Easter 1972 offensive, because Easter Sunday came three days later, N.V.A. troops led by tanks surged out of the Demilitarized Zone separating North and South Vietnam. By that time, several of the fire bases in Vann's area along Rocket Ridge were under siege.

At first, Vann's plan worked to perfection. Hoang Minh Thao tried to unhinge the Rocket Ridge line by knocking out the strongest position near the bottom of it, Fire Base Delta, manned by a battalion of ARVN paratroops. Thao encountered in Vann the man who, as a lieutenant, had kept the riflemen in the fight on the lonely hilltops beyond Masan, Korea, in September, 1950. The N.V.A. attackers had just overwhelmed the paratroops in the northern part of the base at the break of dawn on April 3rd, and were battling their way down trench lines to conquer the rest of it when Vann arrived with two of the newer Cobra gunship helicopters and three Huey transport machines. Vann had come to rescue the crew of a Chinook helicopter that had been shot down while resupplying Delta four days earlier. In an instant, he turned rescue of the crew into rescue of the fire base.

He sent the Cobras slashing into the follow-on groups of Communist infantry who were running through the wire to help their comrades already inside. He took charge of the ARVN artillery, and of the American fighter-bombers arriving from carriers off the coast and from bases in Thailand. While the Saigon paratroops counterattacked, Vann destroyed every attempt by the N.V.A. to reinforce the couple of hundred assault troops who had fought their way inside.

The N.V.A. inside Fire Base Delta were wiped out by the afternoon, but the base would nevertheless have to be abandoned soon for lack of ammunition, water, and medical supplies. Vann announced that he would resupply it himself. The paratroop battalion commander, despite his need, radioed that Vann would be killed. The N.V.A. had sited 12.7-mm. and electrically rotated 14.5-mm. anti-aircraft machine guns around Delta and had a flak cannon whose shells burst in the air with a black puff. That Vann's little Ranger helicopter had not been shot down though it had been dancing high above the base since dawn to direct the artillery and air strikes was already a sufficient miracle for the day. The airborne-brigade commander back at Vo Dinh, on Route 14, and his adviser—Major Peter Kama, a tall Hawaiian who had been one of Vann's captains at My Tho in 1962—told him he was being foolhardy. "I'm experienced at this," Vann said.

Vann supervised the loading of the supplies into the Ranger at the airborne-brigade command post at Vo Dinh. He had noted the positions of the N.V.A. machine guns earlier in the day. He showed his pilot a path to take in and out across the treetops which would present the most elusive target. As soon as the Ranger flashed over the barbed wire of Delta's perimeter, Vann

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and a young ARVN officer who had become his aide, Lieutenant Huynh Van Cai, pitched out cases of M-16 ammunition, grenades, claymore mines, flares, cannisters of water, and medical supplies for scores of wounded paratroopers. Then the pilot tossed the helicopter into a snap roll and twisted away back over the trees to Vo Dinh for another load.

The little Ranger loaded again and again at Vo Dinh and ran the gantlet of machine guns to the fire base. It made the round trip six times before dark. "No Vietnamese general would do that," said Ngo Dzu, the ARVN commander Vann was nominally advising. "Not even a United States general would do that." Fire Base Delta had enough sustenance to hold out through the night, and the next day relieving airborne battalions broke the siege.

Vann's ability to manage Dzu was a major source of his confidence that he would defeat the N.V.A. He had put Dzu in unique debt to him the previous summer by clearing him of an American congressman's charge that he'd engaged in heroin trafficking. Dzu swore to Vann that dope was not among his sources of graft, and Vann had believed him and saved Dzu by organizing a press campaign for him to refute the charges. Dzu was astounded by Vann's ability to assemble reporters and amazed that any American would protect him like this. "He acted as if he were my brother," Dzu said. His feeling of obligation to Vann tended to reinforce his belief that he could promote himself through Vann's talents. Dzu did not always do what Vann wanted, but he did so enough of the time so that members of Dzu's staff who did not like him mocked him as "the slave of John Paul Vann."

VANN's victory at Fire Base Delta raised his confidence to a conviction of near-infallibility. Then, six days later, the trouble started in the other battleground of II Corps, over on the Central Coast. The place seemed insignificant, and Vann thought that he had the situation under control. Landing Zone Pony, a fire base held by an R. F. battalion near Hoai An District center in northern Binh Dinh Province, came under bombardment and ground assault on April 9th and fell the next day.

The ARVN regimental commander who was ordered to retake Pony refused to fight, letting his battalions fall back until he precipitated a rout. His soldiers reverted to instant peasants, tossing away M-16 rifles and helmets and combat web gear and stripping off boots and uniforms to run away across the paddy fields in bare feet and undershorts. Soon all of northern Binh Dinh Province was collapsing before the N.V.A. assault.

While this disaster was unfolding on the coast, a bigger one was in the making in the Highlands. Ngo Dzu had, with Vann's encouragement, invested the equivalent of an ARVN division, roughly ten thousand men, in the defense of Tan Canh. Because Tan Canh was the most forward position, the alignment was a gamble of the highest order. If the Rocket Ridge line broke and Route 14, running south from Tan Canh to Kontum, was cut, the forces around Tan Canh, and their artillery, tanks, M-113 armored personnel carriers, trucks, and other fighting gear, would be enveloped and iso-

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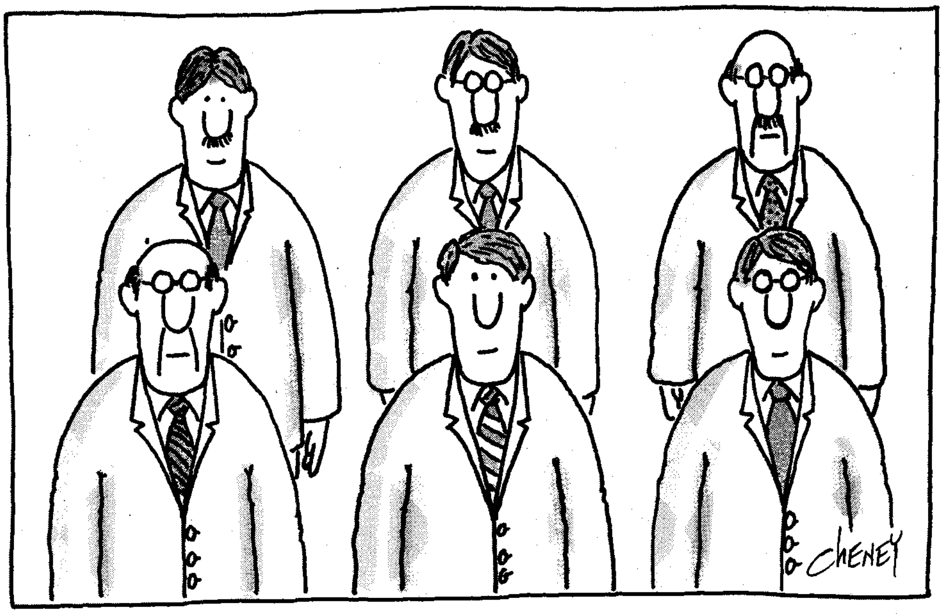
lated. If the Tan Canh defenses themselves cracked, it would be impossible for troops as unsteady as the ARVN to conduct an orderly retreat down a single mountain road. The division would disintegrate. And more was at risk than an ARVN division. In either case, the forces needed to hold Kontum would be lost.



Left to right, top row: Arthur Tyler Winston, Tyler Winston Arthur, Winston Arthur Tyler. *Bottom row:* Tyler Arthur Winston, Winston Tyler Arthur, Arthur Winston Tyler.

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Vann's military deputy, Brigadier General George Wear, told him he was courting a catastrophe. His chief of staff, Colonel Joseph Pizzi, said the same thing. The prudent course would have been to organize a battlefield in depth and seek to exhaust the offensive by withdrawing to successive lines of defense, punishing the N.V.A. for each one. This would have meant giving up Tan Canh and the nearby Dak To District headquarters at some point, with the hope of later regaining them. Vann was in no mood to listen. "The sons of bitches will have to fight or die," he said of the ARVN.

The gamble at Tan Canh was made even more precarious by the character of the division commander there, Colonel Le Duc Dat, whom Vann, as it happened, had helped to get fired for excessive graft when he was a province chief in III Corps in 1967. Dat was a slim, intense, excitable man. He was a heavy smoker of a brand of English cigarettes called Craven "A," which came in little red packages of ten. He did not carry the cigarettes himself. When he wanted one, he flicked his hand, and an aide put a cigarette in his fingers and gave him a light.

On April 21st, while Vann was in Saigon for the day for another strategy conference with General Abrams, Fire Base Delta, the bottom hinge point of Rocket Ridge, was overrun. The N.V.A. pressure was proving to be more than the airborne troops could handle, and the situation was becoming as grim at Tan Canh as it was on Rocket Ridge. Vann's plan to break the N.V.A. on his strong points had not envisioned the ARVN simply sitting and waiting in foxholes and bunkers. He had wanted them to sortie out and make contact in order to bring artillery and air to bear on the N.V.A.; to establish themselves on key ridges; and to counterattack and retake high ground when it was lost. Instead, Dat occupied some of the high ground around Tan Canh and sat. He would not maneuver, nor would he marshal reinforcements and relieve one of his battalions when it was attacked. The N.V.A. infantry were steadily fragmenting his defenses by working their way in between the ARVN positions, each time closer to the former regimental compound where Dat's command bunker was.

When Dat's adviser, Colonel Phillip Kaplan, told him that he had to maneuver and fight, Dat would explain that North Vietnamese soldiers were superior to South Vietnamese soldiers, and that if you tried to maneuver against them they would surround and destroy you. Kaplan, a keen airborne officer, kept his temper with Dat as best he could and continued his coaching, in the positive way of the American military man, but Dat was only behaving as most ARVN commanders would have behaved in the circumstances. He was sheltering in his bunker and assuming that his troops would hang on until United States air power persuaded the enemy to go away.

A successful defense of Tan Canh entailed a slugging match in difficult terrain—and this was a battle that the ARVN was incapable of fighting. Vann had put this army he was trying to use for his own ends into a contest beyond its strength. He tried to goad Dat into becoming the leader he wanted him to be. They were standing in the briefing room of the bunker one day in front of the situation map, with its ominous indications. Vann jabbed at the map, curtly describing the actions that Dat had to take to survive. "Colonel Dat, you are going to be the first division commander in the ARVN to lose your division," he said, "because you are going to be overrun and destroyed if you do not—"

"Oh, that won't happen," Dat replied.

It started to happen on the morning of Sunday, April 23, 1972. An ARVN infantry battalion was engaged with the N.V.A. not far from the Tan Canh compound. The shelling, which had been building gradually since Friday, had increased to about a round a minute of mortar, artillery, and 122-mm. rockets. The bombardment was sufficiently accurate to indicate that smaller groups of N.V.A. had infiltrated to within hundreds of yards and had the compound under good observation. Phil Kaplan received a report that a tank had been knocked out at the main gate. He and his deputy, Lieutenant Colonel Terrence McClain, left the command bunker to investigate, making their way to the gate along a ditch to avoid the bombardment. An ARVN soldier who spoke English told Kaplan he had seen a missile fly through the air and hit the tank.

The command bunker was next. A bit later in the morning, something that could be shot in a straight line—probably another wire-guided anti-tank missile—penetrated the sandbag wall at a weak point near a fresh-air vent and exploded in the radio room, setting the supporting timbers of the bunker on fire. The timbers had been treated with creosote or a similar preservative. Smoke from them billowed. No one had thought to stock fire extinguishers, and there was no water line to the bunker. Kaplan was about to toss a plastic container of water the advisers kept for making coffee at the blaze when he realized he was being foolish. In moments, men would be suffocating and trampling each other in a stampede for the exits. "Get everybody out of here!" he ordered.

The 22nd Division headquarters was soon reduced to a pile of smoldering sandbags, the timbers of the bunker collapsing as they were consumed by the flames. An alternative command post was set up in a much smaller bunker beside the advisers' living quarters, and in the afternoon the wounded were evacuated by helicopter. Vann flew up from Pleiku and supervised the evacuation of the wounded—a nerve-racking business for them and for the helicopter crews, because of the incoming shells. Vann would not duck from them himself. Before he returned to Pleiku, Kaplan told him that if the worst came the advisers would assemble for a pickup at an alternative helicopter pad next to the minefield on the west side of the compound.

The N.V.A. force shooting the missiles kept after the ARVN tanks around the Tan Canh compound. Eight tanks had been operational in the morning. By Sunday afternoon, there was only one. Dat took to sitting in a chair and staring. As night fell, he looked at Kaplan and said, "We will be overrun tomorrow."

That night, fifteen North Vietnamese tanks approached. The South Vietnamese militia at the first bridge the tanks had to cross had M-72 LAWs (Light Antitank Weapons), the Vietnam-era successor to the bazooka. They were ordered to ambush the Communist tanks. They ran away.

"Yes, we'll do it," Dat said when Kaplan told him to dispatch ARVN tank-killer teams with more LAWs. The teams didn't leave their foxholes.

"We've already given those orders," Dat replied when Kaplan told him to summon tanks of their own from a nearby airfield. They didn't come.

The crew of a 106-mm. recoilless cannon sited along the road apparently never fired a round.

"Colonel, the artillery must fire!" Terry McClain shouted at Dat as the tanks approached Dat's command post.

"The artillery is firing, Colonel," Dat replied.

JOHN VANN wrote his will in his Ranger helicopter while speeding from Pleiku to Tan Canh early on the morning of April 24th. The last time he visited Norfolk, his oldest brother, Frank, had asked him if he wasn't afraid of dying in Vietnam. "Hell, no," he'd said. He had survived so many scrapes that he was sure the war would never claim him. The odds did not apply to him, he said. After the offensive intensified, however, he had started to wonder. The anti-aircraft fire was getting so bad, he wrote Dan Ellsberg, that he might not come through this fight.

Vann carried a three-by-five-inch spiral notepad in his shirt pocket to jot down whatever he wanted to remember of a day. He took it out as the Ranger flew toward Tan Canh, noted the time, 0700, and the date at the top right corner of the lined page, printed "LAST WILL & TESTAMENT," and wrote underneath, "My wife, Juliette . . ., and my daughter, Paula, are to share equally in my estate. All my possessions in SVN are to be sold and the proceeds also given to my wife, Juliette." He signed "John P. Vann" and put the notepad back in his pocket. He evidently thought that if it was found on his body he would have provided for Julie and Paula.

Scud clouds of the oncoming monsoon, a morning haze, and smoke from fires lit by the N.V.A. bombardment obscured Tan Canh. Chief Warrant Officer Robert Richards, Vann's pilot, saw that there were enough holes in the clouds so that he would be able to get underneath them. Another Ranger, piloted by Captain Dolph Todd, was right behind Vann and Richards'. Todd had volunteered the day before to be Vann's backup pilot on the twenty-fourth. He liked hazardous flying but had not known then what he would be facing.

Vann began talking on the radio to Kaplan, McClain, and seven other Americans from the division advisory team. Kaplan, having despaired of stimulating any resistance, had ordered his team to abandon the substitute command bunker shortly after dawn. He had made sure when they left it that two of his advisers were carrying portable radios, so that they would be able to communicate with helicopters. Dat and his staff had followed the Americans out of the bunker but in a few minutes had returned to its seeming safety. The N.V.A., to keep its opponents intimidated while the tanks drew near, had quickened the bombardment to three or four rounds of mortar, artillery, and rockets every minute. Richards and Todd, who were monitoring Vann's radio conversation, learned they were going to face the additional risk of landing the helicopters on mines. The advisers said they were in the middle of the minefield where it curved around the west side of the Tan Canh compound.

By the time Kaplan had led his advisers to the Cobra parking place next to the minefield, where he had told Vann to pick them up, two T-54 tanks had rolled in through the front of the compound, the N.V.A. infantry were starting to follow, and a third T-54 had pulled up beneath a tall concrete water tower at the west front corner, not far away, threatening the advisers' position. Captain Kenneth Yonan, a twenty-three-year-old West Pointer who was a deputy regimental adviser, had climbed to the top of the water tower to call in jets on the tanks. He hadn't been able to do so, because of the clouds and haze, and the tanks had trapped him on the water tower. Yonan was never seen again.

Staff Sergeant Walter Ward, the team's administrative N.C.O., spotted a way to get through the minefield and gain some distance from the tank under the water tower. About nine hundred of the nearly twelve hundred ARVN officers and men stationed at the Tan Canh headquarters were signal, engineer, and other service personnel. When the tanks came in through the front of the compound, these service troops panicked and burst out through the barbed wire and the minefield that encircled the rest of Tan Canh, many blowing themselves up on their own mines as they ran. Ward suggested that the team walk in the footsteps of those ARVN soldiers who had escaped unhurt. The advisers stopped at an old road that ran through a slight dip about midpoint in the minefield. Kaplan thought the fold in the ground there would partly shield a helicopter from the tank when it landed. The Americans lay down to hide while they waited. Lying around them were terrified ARVN soldiers also hoping to survive.

Bob Richards, piloting Vann's helicopter, didn't see any sheltering fold in the ground. All he saw was the 100-mm. gun in the turret of the T-54 under the water tower pointed right at the spot where the advisers were lying and where he was about to put his helicopter. "I'm coming in to land and I'm looking at that big son of a bitch and I'm thinking, I ain't going to make it, this is the end of me," Richards said later. "That barrel looked to me like I could have flown the helicopter down it."

Mines or no mines, Richards came in "hot," the skids striking hard, the rotor guard at the end of the tail boom bouncing against the ground. Todd darted in after him. Kaplan sent three of the advisers scrambling into each machine. He did not want to risk a crash by overloading the Rangers; neither did Vann. Kaplan and McClain, as the senior officers, would wait for the next pickup, along with Captain David Stewart, the division signal adviser, who had one of the portable radios. Richards stared at the big gun again when he lifted away. To his surprise, it did not fire, and no one else seemed to be shooting at them either.

Two of the ARVN soldiers in the minefield grabbed hold of the radio antennae on the sides of Vann and Richards' helicopter when it took off with the advisers in the back, and a couple of other Saigon soldiers clung to the skids. Vann could also see several ARVN dangling from the outside of Todd's aircraft. He had originally intended to ferry the advisers to the former Special Forces camp at Ben Het, a dozen miles to the west, which was one of the few islands still held by the Saigon side along the Laotian border. Ben Het was relatively safe because it was not under threat of imminent assault. The Rangers could bear the weight of the ARVN soldiers clinging to them once they were aloft, but Vann was afraid the soldiers would lose their grip during the long flight to Ben Het and fall to their deaths. He decided to take the advisers to the main Dak To airfield, Dak To II, instead, because it was just a couple of miles away. He knew that the N.V.A. would soon overrun the airfield, too, but he had a Huey on the way that could reach Dak To II before the N.V.A. did. Vann and Richards and Todd dropped the six advisers off at the airfield. He radioed the Huey pilot and ordered him to land there and fly the advisers to Pleiku.

Richards and Vann started back for Kaplan and the two others, but this time they were less successful. An N.V.A. soldier who knew how to shoot saw them coming. He popped up from behind a bush and raised his AK-47 to rake the front of the cockpit with a burst. Richards "honked" back on the controls, powering the helicopter up into an arc, in the hope of escaping into one of the scud clouds. The stream of bullets thudded into the Ranger, riddling the FM radio in the console between Richards and Vann, and smacking the floor under Vann. He would have been wounded or worse but for Richards' gymnastic maneuver and the fact that the AK-47 fires a bullet that is relatively light and slow. The rounds that struck under Vann came through the honeycombed aluminum decking of the floor at an angle, tumbled, and lost their force.

Vann raised Todd on an alternate radio and told him to go for Kaplan, McClain, and Stewart. Todd picked them up without incident. Vann instructed him to bring them to Pleiku behind him and Richards. The damage to the radio made it imperative for them to return there. The fuel gauge fell with unusual rapidity during the flight. When they landed at the pad beside II Corps headquarters, Richards climbed out and looked at the fuel cells. The N.V.A. soldier had punched holes in them, too. The fuel was running down the fuselage. Richards shook his head. One tracer bullet would have turned the Ranger into an orange fireball.

John Vann paid no attention. He

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leaped into Todd's machine as soon as Kaplan and the two other advisers got out. His ARVN aide, Cai, who had been waiting for him at the headquarters pad, jumped into the rear seat and they headed back to Tan Canh. Vann had Todd land near Dak To II to rescue an American major, the adviser to an ARVN airborne battalion that Dat had been lent a week before in an attempt to stiffen his defenses. The airfield had been overrun by now, and some of the paratroops were in a panic. With his rifle butt, Vann beat off those who had grabbed the skid on his side of the Ranger as Todd tried to lift away with the major and the major's wounded interpreter aboard. So many clung to Todd's side, however, that the helicopter tipped until a main rotor blade struck the ground, and the machine crashed, flipping over twice. Cai was pinned underneath. Vann pulled him free, snatched a portable radio from the wreckage, guided Cobra gunships in strafing runs against N.V.A. soldiers who immediately started to close, and hammered at them with his M-16. A Huey pilot managed to maneuver down and pluck Vann, Cai, Todd, and the two others from the Communist infantry, his aircraft taking repeated hits as he did so.

Vann left Cai at the Kontum dispensary for treatment of an injured shoulder, got another helicopter, and flew once more toward Tan Canh. The close call had reminded him of his will. He stopped at the airborne-brigade command post at Vo Dinh, where Peter Kama was the brigade adviser. He tore the page out of the notepad, had Kama sign it as a witness, and left the will with him for safekeeping.

Thousands of ARVN soldiers who could get away from Tan Canh ran so fast down the road toward Kontum that the Montagnard tribesmen nicknamed them "the rabbit soldiers." Dat perished. He finally did leave the bunker, after vainly radioing for a helicopter to rescue him at the bunker door, and somehow reached Dak To II airfield, but he was wounded there and may have shot himself with his service pistol. Kaplan and McClain were fortunate that rank required them to wait in the minefield, and so was Stewart to wait with them. Three of the six advisers whom Richards and Todd had shuttled to Dak To II were killed when the Huey that Vann sent to fetch them was shot down while taking off. Sergeant Ward, who had led the way into the minefield, was among the survivors.

Had the N.V.A. moved rapidly on Kontum, Vann and others later acknowledged, the town would have surely fallen to them. If Kontum had fallen in 1972, the panic that was always just waiting beneath the surface on the Saigon side would have burst forth in an uncontrollable contagion in II Corps. Pleiku, to the south, would have fallen, too. The whole of the Highlands would have been lost and much of the Central Coast would have become untenable. At the behest of Nixon, Henry Kissinger was attempting to negotiate a compromise agreement in Paris that would allow the United States to extricate itself from Vietnam. If the divisions of the N.V.A. were linked from the mountains to the sea and South Vietnam was split in two, there would not be a great deal to bargain about.

Joe Pizzi, Vann's chief of staff, saw the incipient panic and forced Vann to let him have a secret plan drawn up for the emergency evacuation of all Americans from Pleiku if the Saigon forces broke. Vann had Cai smuggle out most of his clothes and other belongings on administrative flights to his rear headquarters at Nhatrang on the coast. He even sent away a wooden footlocker, painted brown, with a padlock on it to which he had the only key. He called the footlocker the Box. He had never parted with it before. It held albums with photographs of him and his sister and brothers in Norfolk, of Johnny Vann doing a backflip in a sandpile at Ferrum Junior College, of himself as an Air Corps cadet and a second lieutenant navigating a B-29 called Lost Weekend in 1945, of Mary Jane in Rochester, of her and the children in Japan and Germany. The footlocker held his Army officer's record, his medals and awards, and an inscribed silver cigarette box that David Halberstam and I and the other reporters gave him in 1963 for moral heroism and professional integrity, and it held photographs of him with some of his sexual partners.

"If anything ever happens to me watch out for the Box," he said with a smile.

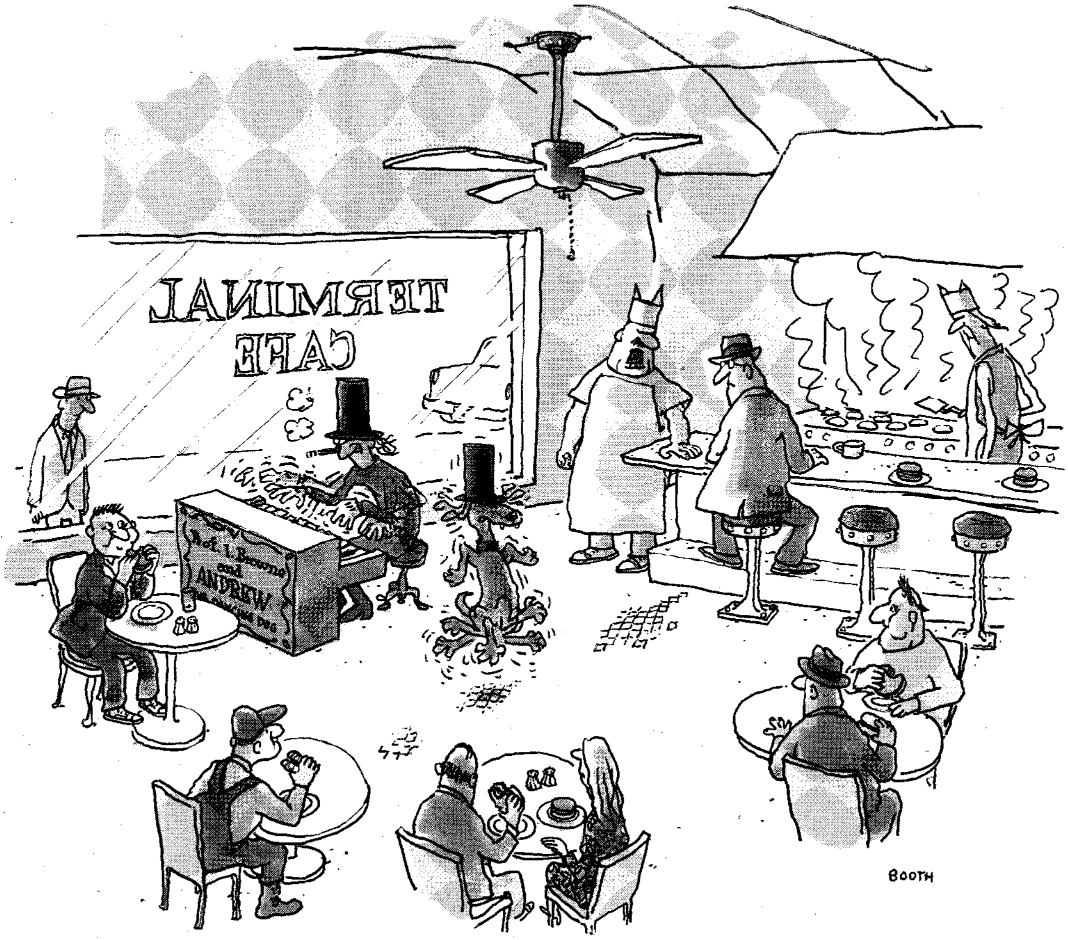
"What's in the Box?" a subordinate who did not know him well asked.

"I'm in the Box," Vann said.

ARMIES, like human beings, are not capable of what is not in them. The N.V.A. had no tradition of rapid pursuit. Its experience called for elaborate planning and positioning for each major step of a campaign. Vann's Vietnamese enemy delayed the attack on Kontum for twenty days after the fall of Tan Canh. He needed every day. Ngo Dzu, his instrument, broke in his hands as Cao had ten years earlier. Dzu lost his nerve and secretly plotted to abandon the Highlands, scheming to precipitate a retreat from Kontum.

Vann's rage saved him. In Hau Nghia in 1965 he had cursed the leaders of the United States for refusing "to take over command of this operation lock, stock, and barrel." Vann now did precisely that. He abandoned any pretense of who was running II Corps and overrode Dzu. He had a Vietnamese officer who was willing to try to defend Kontum, Ly Tong Ba, the commander of the M-113 company at the battle of Ap Bac in 1963. Vann's opinion of Ba as a soldier had changed over the intervening years, and at the end of January, 1972, he had maneuvered Ba, by this time a full colonel, into command of the 23rd ARVN Division at Ban Me Thuot in the southern Highlands. Vann proceeded to strip the southern Highlands of troops and flew the entire 23rd Division into Kontum. Then he got Creighton Abrams to let him have the B-52 bombers of the Strategic Air Command, which flew their missions from bases on Guam and in southern Thailand. Between May 14th, when the struggle for the town began, and the end of the first week in June, when the North Vietnamese attackers withdrew in despair, leaving thousands of their comrades dead on the battlefield, John Vann laid the best part of three hundred B-52 strikes in the environs of Kontum. Vann would circle in his Ranger off a scheduled strike a few minutes before the B-52s arrived and then low-level around the area as soon as the smoke and dust had cleared enough for him to see how many N.V.A. soldiers he had killed. He would fire bursts from his M-16 into the bomb craters. There was no danger, he explained to two reporters riding with him one day; anyone "still living in there is in such a state of shock that he couldn't pull a trigger for thirty minutes." On another day, he found forty to fifty N.V.A. soldiers who had survived staggering around among the craters. He radioed for Cobra gunships to finish them off.

Vann did not see the fallacy in his victory. He did not see that in having to assume total control at the moment of crisis he had proved the Saigon regime had no will of its own to survive. Nor did it occur to him that he might be playing the role he and Fred Weyand had played at Tet—postponing the end. He had been the indispensable man. Major General John Hill, who had become Vann's deputy shortly before the battle when George Wear was evacuated, remarked afterward on how necessary Vann was to the victory. Without Vann there would have been no battle at Kontum, Hill said, because the Vietnamese on the Saigon side would not have stayed to fight.



"I don't know much about show business, but I do know we're selling more hamburgers."

• •

Larry Stern, a Washington *Post* reporter who had first met Vann in the mid-nineteen-sixties, came to Pleiku to interview him and was astonished by the man he found. He had never seen a person so suffused with rage and exaltation. Stern remembered the way Vann's eyes "burned" as he described how he was wielding the bombers. "Anytime the wind is blowing from the north where the B-52 strikes are turning the terrain into a moonscape, you can tell from the battlefield stench that the strikes are effective," Vann said. "Outside Kontum, wherever you dropped bombs you scattered bodies."

ON the morning of June 7, 1972, two days after the last N.V.A. soldier was killed inside Kontum, John Vann spoke to a group of recently arrived advisers assembled at his rear headquarters in Nhatrang. His talk was a periodic event called the Newcomers' Briefing. He said he was "often struck by the widespread belief" that South Vietnam had "suffered immeasurably" from an American war. "In point of fact . . . while South Vietnam is not worth what it has cost the United States in terms of United States values, in terms of South Vietnamese values these people are much further ahead today than they would have been either with peace and a non-Communist government or with peace and a Communist government. . . . In 1962 the literacy rate was fifteen per cent. Today it's over eighty per cent." The social revolution he had wanted to capture from the Communists in 1965 "has been achieved," Vann said, "partly by design, but mostly by the accident of the war." He spoke of miracle rice and irrigation equipment, of television sets and Honda motorcycles. Forced urbanization had helped bring the social revolution to pass, he said, by creating a class of "consumers" for the farmers. In the year in which Vann spoke, thirty-nine thousand Saigon soldiers died.

On June 9th, Vann flew to Saigon with John Hill for a morning ceremony at which Abrams awarded Hill the Legion of Merit for his contribution to the victory. Vann stayed there for an afternoon strategy conference with Abrams and Weyand and the United States Army generals advising the three other ARVN corps commanders. He and Hill returned to Pleiku late in the day with Colonel Robert Kingston, Vann's new deputy. Hill was going home. He had already postponed his scheduled departure for several weeks to see Vann through the battle. Vann tarried at the Pleiku mess for the farewell dinner for Hill. Wine was served, and there were short speeches. Vann told Hill and others at the head table that he was leaving for Kontum immediately afterward to spend the night there. He didn't want to break his record. "I've been in Kontum every day since this thing started," he said. He had the mess stewards wrap up some fruit and leftover fresh rolls and picked up an unopened bottle of wine to take along to Kontum.

He was in a jubilant mood when his

helicopter took off, shortly after nine. He had celebrated between the morning ceremony and the afternoon strategy conference by making love to Lee and then to two other Vietnamese women. During an earlier trip to Saigon, in May, he had started the official proceedings to marry Julie and now he had just sent her a note. He had forgotten all about the will he wrote on the day Tan Canh fell; Peter Kama had gone off to Hue, where the airborne brigade had been transferred, with the slip of notepaper in his wallet. Vann radioed ahead to Kontum asking for a report on the weather. The sky over the town was fairly clear on the night of June 9th, but it had been so miserable with rain and fog on recent nights that the officer in Kontum could not resist a quip after answering that the weather was fine. "You won't have to reach down with your foot to find the LZ," he said.

"Roger that!" Vann replied. "I am fifteen minutes from your location."

Two creeks, the Khol and the Drou, cross Route 14 about three miles south of the Chu Pao (Pao Mountain) Pass below Kontum, near the Montagnard hamlet of Ro Uay. Rain squalls and heavy mist still lingered in this area. The ARVN soldiers manning a sandbag blockhouse at the bridge there heard a helicopter approaching through the dark sky and then saw a fireball and heard a crash. A Cobra pilot spotted the last flames of the wreckage under a grove of tall trees—the only tall grove for miles around—which the helicopter had struck in the bad weather. A special Huey gunship called the Night Hawk shone down the beam of its searchlight and located a place where Lieutenant Colonel Jack Anderson could land his Huey. He and a senior aircraft mechanic who had volunteered to go with him, Master Sergeant John Johnson, came upon Vann lying face down in the grove. He had died instantly from the shock of the crash, and his body was broken in many places, but he was not bloodied, and the flames had not touched him. His Wellington boots were still on his feet. (The Vietnamese Communists quickly claimed to have shot down Vann's helicopter, but an investigation showed that gunfire had not been involved.) A patrol of ARVN Rangers who had arrived a few minutes earlier from a nearby fire base exacted payment for the danger of being sent to fetch Vann at night in an area where they had been fighting with the N.V.A. They stripped him of his wristwatch, his wallet, and his Rutgers Class of 1954 ring before they carried his body to Anderson's helicopter.

NIXON took advantage of the respite bought by the victory at Kontum to have Kissinger negotiate a settlement that would doom the Saigon regime when the next crisis occurred. The Paris Agreement of January, 1973, removed the advisers and the residual United States military forces propping up the Saigon regime, but left the N.V.A. in the South to finish its task. The exigencies of American domestic politics demanded the settlement. The President had been facing reëlection, and he had exhausted his ability to manipulate public opinion on the war. The Vietnamese Communists would not give him a settlement until he agreed to withdraw the last of his forces and leave theirs in place. The farce of mutual withdrawal was at an end. Nixon and Kissinger convinced themselves that they were not condemning their Saigon surrogate. They reasoned that they could hold Hanoi at bay with the threat of American air power. On April 30, 1975, the tanks of the N.V.A. crashed through the front gate of the Presidential palace in Saigon.

THOSE who assembled at Arlington on June 16, 1972, to see John Vann to his grave reflected the divisions and the wounds that the war had inflicted on American society. Yet almost every one of them had been touched by this man. Some came because they had admired him and still shared his cause, some because they had parted with him along the way but still thought of him as a friend, some because they had been harmed by him but cherished him for what he might have been. Many at Arlington sensed that they were burying with John Vann the war and the decade of Vietnam. The mourners included William Westmoreland; Robert Komer, who gave the eulogy; Edward Kennedy; and Daniel Ellsberg. The military band played "The Colonel Bogey March" (Vann's favorite song) and "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" (which Mary Jane had requested, because it best expressed her feelings). Peter, Vann's youngest son at sixteen years, received the flag from the coffin.

Peter had been six years old when his father first went to Vietnam. He had not felt any genuine grief until the moment he accepted the flag, because he had hardly known his father, and knew even less about what his father had done. Peter was not an intellectual; his interest was tinkering with cars. The war had been going on so long that he had forgotten which side was the enemy. When the family was driven to the South Vietnamese Embassy the previous day to receive the posthumous award to his father of the Saigon government's highest honor, Peter had wondered whether it was the South Vietnamese or the North Vietnamese Embassy. He hoped, as he took the flag and started to cry, that his father had not died hating him for all the arguments they had had when his father was home. He also hoped that his father would not be ashamed of him for crying. Vann had always ridiculed his sons when they wept, telling them it was a sign of weakness.

Vann's oldest son, John Allen, twenty-four, chose not to stand at the end of the service, as was customary, to receive condolences from William Rogers, the Secretary of State, who was representing President Nixon at the funeral; from Melvin Laird, the Secretary of Defense; from Westmoreland and the rest of the official pallbearers; and from several other dignitaries who filed by the front row of chairs where the family were seated. He knew that if he remained seated the rest of the family would. His acquaintance with these men was limited to television and newspapers. He had agreed to the state funeral at Arlington because he thought that the occasion would vindicate his father. He felt that his father would have taken satisfaction from this pomp and circumstance. Some of these men, or others like them, he said to himself, had probably been involved in forcing his father to retire from the Army in 1963. He thought he would even the score a little by letting them bend over to shake his mother's hand, and his, and those of his brothers, and thus make amends to his father in death.

Jesse Vann, twenty-one, had been thinking about the war again since his father's death. His father's death had made him realize that the war was as alive as ever, and that he and other people had started to accept its existence. Passively accepting the war was wrong, Jesse thought, and he was not going to tolerate this complicity in himself any longer. Jesse was the son most like his father in refusing to endure anything that denied him the freedom to live life as he wanted to live it. He stood out at the funeral, with a mass of blond hair falling defiantly over his shoulders, unfurled from a ponytail in which he customarily wore it. He had learned how to put his hair up into a hairnet and hide it under a wig when he had to find a job. Today, he flaunted its length. Jesse's beard was also unkempt. A year or two earlier, his father had mailed him a blue polyester suit from Hong Kong. John Allen had asked him to wear the suit to the funeral, but Jesse disliked suits, regarding them as uniforms. He was wearing only the coat of the suit, with a pair of purple knit slacks that he had selected in a Denver store and his mother had paid for before they flew to Washington. His shoes were a two-tone white-and-black pair that had been his late Grandfather Allen's golf shoes. His grandmother had supplied them as a substitute for a pair of dirty brown canvas crêpe-soled shoes that he normally wore.

Jesse decided he would give his father a parting gift—the gift of his own honesty and his willingness to take a stand for what he believed to be right. He would leave half of his draft card on the coffin with his father as a token of the gift. Then he would complete the gift by handing the other half of the card to Richard Nixon when the family drove to the White House in a little while for a ceremony at which Nixon was to honor his father with the posthumous award of the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Someone handed Jesse a rose to leave on the coffin. He took out his draft card, ripped it in half, put Nixon's half back in his pocket, and tucked the half he was giving his father under the rose, between the bloom and a branch of the stem, to try to conceal what he was doing. He laid rose and card on top of the silver-gray coffin, alongside roses that his mother, his brothers, and his father's relatives had placed there. "Here, this is all I can give you now. This is all I can do," he said silently to his father. He turned away and went over to talk to Dan Ellsberg for a few minutes before it was time to leave for the White House. Jesse thought of what he would do when the family walked into the Oval Office for the ceremony and Nixon put out his hand to shake Jesse's. Instead of shaking hands, Jesse would silently present Nixon with his half of the draft card. It was a crime to refuse to carry one's draft card and an additional crime to mutilate one. Jesse wondered if it was a third crime to present a mutilated half to the President. He did not look forward to going to jail, but he believed that his act of protest would be worth it. One of his friends had gone to a federal prison for refusing to be drafted.

Jesse's younger brother Tommy, eighteen, saw him tear the draft card in two and asked him what he was doing. Jesse reluctantly explained what he had in store for Nixon. Tommy could not keep Jesse's exciting plan to himself, and told Peter about it on the way to the White House. Tommy approved of Jesse's scheme. Tommy was anticipating the expression on Nixon's face when Jesse handed him half of a mutilated draft card. The war might at last come home to Richard Nixon, Tommy thought.

Peter said that Jesse's plan was stupid. Peter had been looking forward to this opportunity to meet the President.

At the White House, the family were shown into the Roosevelt Room, about five paces across the hall from the Oval Office, for what was supposed to be a wait of a few minutes.

"Jesse, don't do it!" John Allen said. He had learned of Jesse's scheme when he had overheard Tommy and Peter talking about it.

"Why not?" Jesse asked.

"This day is not for you, Jesse," his brother said, keeping his voice low and controlled, to try to prevent anyone else in the room from hearing them. "This is for Dad. This is what Dad lived for and what he died for. Don't belittle him by doing this."

The day that John Allen saw as the vindication of their father would be destroyed, he said. The White House press corps would be covering the ceremony. The spectacle of the long-haired son of a legendary American warrior in Vietnam handing the President half of his draft card, after leaving the other half on top of his fa-

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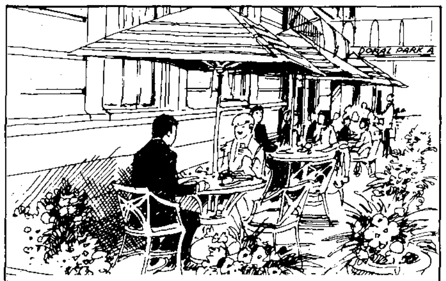

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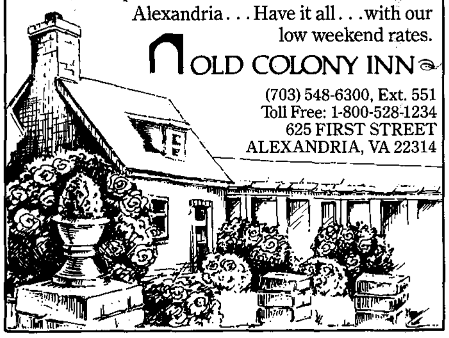

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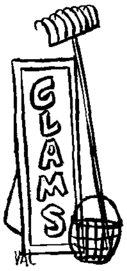
ther's coffin, would make quite a story.

Tommy guessed what they were arguing about, and came over to defend Jesse. "But this is what Jesse believes in," he said.

The three of them began to argue. Jesse's uncles, who were also present, overheard them and joined in the attempt to dissuade him.

"If you're thinking of doing that, I won't go in there," his Uncle Frank, a stocky, partly bald man, said.

"Well, you do what you want," Jesse replied. "I have to do what I have to do."



His Uncle Gene, an Air Force senior master sergeant, with the seven stripes of his rank on the sleeves of his tunic, resembled Jesse's father in the way his face got red when he was angry. "Jesse," he said, "your father was my brother, and I've known him a hell of a lot longer than you have. He believed so strongly in what he was fighting for that to do this to him would be a slap in his face."

"Leave me alone," Jesse said to them all. "I have my own conscience to obey."

John Allen walked over to his mother. "Mom," he said, "Jesse wants to give Nixon half of his draft card. We can't let this happen."

Mary Jane began to sob. She went to Jesse and pleaded with him. "Please Jesse, please, for your father, don't do this. This is your father's day, not yours, or mine, or anybody else's. You would disgrace him." His mother's pleading troubled Jesse, but he would not relent.

The Department of the Army civilian official who was supervising the funeral and a captain assisting him now realized what was going on, and rushed out of the room to find someone on the White House staff. They met Brent Scowcroft, who was then an Air Force brigadier general and the President's military assistant, in the hallway. He had known Vann slightly and liked him. The two men warned Scowcroft about what was happening, and then one of them brought out John Allen to relate what Jesse intended.

"That's impossible," Scowcroft said.

"We really don't know how to stop him," John Allen said. "He's determined to do it."

Scowcroft walked into the Oval Office, gave the President the briefest possible explanation of what was occurring, and said there would be a slight delay while he handled the problem. A career staff officer, Scowcroft was known for his businesslike approach to crises large and small.

He went into the Roosevelt Room and drew Jesse aside from the group that was haranguing him. Scowcroft spoke to Jesse in a calm voice. "Listen," he said. "Whatever you think about the war and whatever you want to do about it, this ceremony is to honor your father. There is no way you can do this and not ruin the ceremony. Unless you promise us you won't give your draft card to the President, unless you promise us you won't do this, we'll have to cancel the ceremony."

Jesse had already begun to weaken under his mother's continued pleading and because his Uncle Frank, in contrast to the others, had quieted down and was trying to reason with him. Jesse decided that he might be exploiting for his own ends a situation in which he was present only because of his father. He might not have a moral right to do that. Since he couldn't act with a clean conscience, he wouldn't act at all. Anyway, he wasn't being given much choice. "O.K., O.K.," he said to Scowcroft. "I promise not to do it."

Scowcroft squeezed Jesse's forearm and gave him a "Good boy!" look. He turned to John Allen. "Will he or won't he?" Scowcroft asked.

"If he says he won't do it, he won't do it," John Allen answered.

Scowcroft returned to the Oval Office and told the President that the ceremony could go forward.

John Allen escorted his mother into the Oval Office, followed by his brothers and his aunt and two uncles. As the family entered, the President was sitting at his desk, which had been cleared of work except for a single looseleaf folder he had apparently been reading. He closed the folder, rose, walked around the desk, and met them halfway into the room. The cleared desk, the last bit of work put aside to give full attention, the rising and the meeting halfway were Richard Nixon's ritual for greeting visitors to the President's office. He expressed his sympathy to Mary Jane and John Allen and then shook hands with each in turn. Tommy overheard Nixon say "Thanks" to Jesse when they shook hands.

After an official photograph had been taken, the President spoke briefly to the family. He seemed somewhat nervous and ill at ease, perhaps because of Jesse. He said that Vann's death had been a personal loss to him as well as a loss to the country. He extended sympathy to them on behalf of the entire nation. He had felt friendship toward Vann, he said, and great respect and appreciation for Vann's work in Vietnam. The last time he saw Vann had been right here in this office, during one of Vann's home leaves. Nixon said that there had been a shared understanding of the war in that meeting, and that Vann had given him new insights into the conflict and into the desires of the people of South Vietnam. The President said that he had wanted to give Vann the nation's highest award, the Medal of Honor, but the law prevented it, because Vann had technically been a civilian official. Therefore, Nixon said, he was reluctantly limited to bestowing the second-highest honor on Vann, the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

The President's aides let the reporters and television cameramen into the room. John Allen received the medal for his father, because Mary Jane was no longer Vann's legal wife. He stood in front of the President, at the right side of the desk, where the colors and battle streamers of the country's armed services hung from a row of flagpoles crested by gold-plated eagles.

Scowcroft kept his eyes on Jesse.

Before handing the medal to John Allen, the President read the citation praising Vann:

"Soldier of peace and patriot of two nations, the name of John Paul Vann will be honored as long as free men remember the struggle to preserve the independence of South Vietnam.

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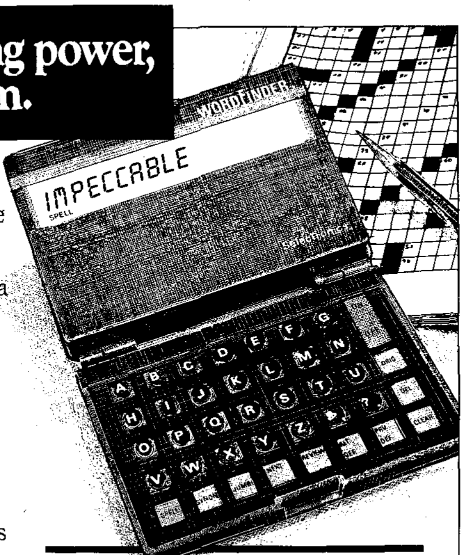

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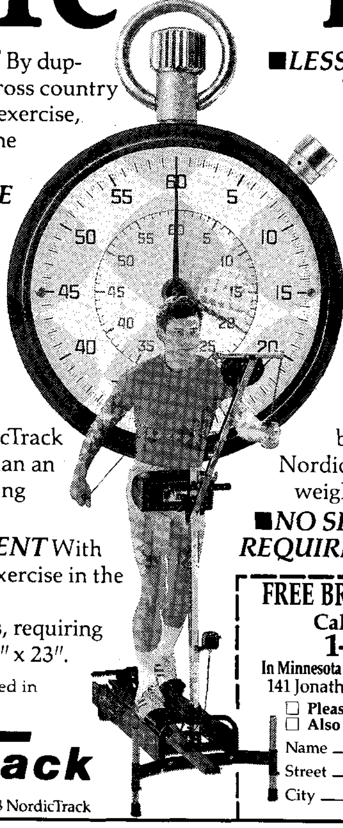

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DANCING

Two Spring Seasons

ON the first Tuesday after New York City Ballet's American Music Festival, it was a restorative to be back at the New York State Theatre. True, three of the evening's four works had been given during the festival; but as the evening began, with the Balanchine-Stravinsky "Divertimento from 'Baiser de la Fée,' " it was easy to look forward to the pleasures of business as usual at City Ballet. Blue skies onstage; rhythm and counter-rhythm; gathering undercurrents and sudden strokes of drama. The succeeding six weeks of the spring season—a worthy commemoration, on paper, of the company's forty years—offered to open up further regions of this nonpareil world. Balanchine ballets from each decade of the company's existence were presented, as were "Apollo" and "La Sonnambula," two masterpieces made before there was a City Ballet. Dispiriting, then, that some of these were danced in a spirit not of vibrant pride but of smart, art-of-the-deal maneuvering.

On the season's penultimate night, the company presented, as one of its two contributions to New York City's International Festival of the Arts, the great triple bill of Balanchine-Stravinsky "Greek" ballets—"Apollo," "Orpheus," "Agon." In these three works—even in "Apollo," made in Europe for Diaghilev's Ballets Russes—you see the combination of virtues that made Balanchine an American artist. No hankering for time past; the marvellous occurring as something casual; colloquial ease interlocking with the pursuit of the ideal. These qualities are admired the world over; nonsense to think that they have had their day. For "Apollo" and "Agon" it was a once-only appearance in the season. Just as well. "Apollo," despite Robert Irving's brisk, sharp conducting, and despite Ib Andersen's lively, boyish account of the title role, looked both lightweight and arch—in particular with the fake-burning glances and rococo wrist flourishes of its underpowered Terpsichore, Heather Watts. "Agon" is now reduced to a study in chic, with the glib wit of a Stephen Sondheim number. Its title has no validity. "Orpheus," by contrast, was given a serious performance, with Robert La Fosse as the hero, Valentina Kozlova as Eurydice, and Leonid Kozlov as the Dark Angel. The Kozlovs belong to a different mythological world from that of La Fosse—with so young and fresh an Orpheus between two adult, assured Europeans, the tale took on Henry James undertones—but all three were urgent in rhythm and gesture. There were two more "Orpheus" casts. One of them, with Rudolf Nureyev appearing for the first time with New York City Ballet in its regular season, I missed. Nureyev's appearances today are of more interest to record keepers than to dance lovers. In the other cast, Ib Andersen, Stephanie Saland, and Adam Lüders kept the ballet's narrative alive, although Andersen provided too little ballast to the role's dramatic passivity: Orpheus as the Reluctant Artist. Neither this spring nor in any of the eighties performances I've seen of it has "Orpheus" been fully absorbing as a Balanchine-Stravinsky-Noguchi *Gesamtkunstwerk*. The symbolic impact of the apotheosis, in which the dead musician's lyre (*ars longa*) slowly rises from the earth and hangs above the horizon, is something I've always wanted to feel—now more than ever—but without success.

The vital force that should be omnipresent in the Balanchine-Stravinsky ballets was most surely felt when, for a single performance, a new cast danced "Rubies." Melinda Roy, Diana White, and, especially, Damian Woetzel danced with a percussive thrust and a vigor of plastique that reanimated the whole ballet. Though I can't hail these at once as great performances, "Rubies" hasn't had so keen an edge since Mikhail Baryshnikov's performances of it with Patricia McBride in '79. Its motors were chugging freely. There were efforts to revitalize the rest of "Jewels" with fresh casts. Perhaps it simply needs to be rested for a few seasons; the corps de ballet, except when Irving's conducting goaded it into attention, was lacklustre here as in few other works. Nonetheless, I was happy to see certain individual performances, especially the most valuable of the débuts—Darci Kistler's in "Diamonds." Until injury claimed her in the seventh week, this spring saw Kistler ascending to new glory; because of her performances, the middle of the season was the most exciting part to attend. Earlier, during the American Music Festival, she had danced two other Balanchine ballets for the first time—"Slaughter on Tenth Avenue" and "Ivesiana." She then returned to three she had first danced last year—"La Sonnambula," "Walpurgisnacht," and "Liebeslieder Walzer"—and added another new role, "Allegro Brillante." We're unlikely ever to see Kistler regain the dazzling strength she enjoyed before an injury in 1983 kept her offstage for two years. In these performances, however, she was no longer an heiress apparent but one of the company's central interpreters of Balanchine. The spontaneity and youthfulness of all her performances are enchanting in themselves, but within them her dancing has a subtle and fascinating range of contrasts: blushing audacity, delicacy and hugeness, grandeur and intimacy, sweetness and abandon. These things are present in all she does, but in varying strengths, so that the tone of a work is continually changed and refreshed.

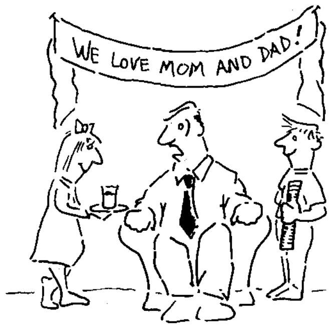
Like all great dancers, Kistler shows that she is not merely a role's custodian but—what is more vital—its investigator. Who could have foreseen in June last year, when she first danced the Sleepwalker, that twelve months later she would give an interpretation so movingly reaccentuated? Every step had personal urgency; not only mystery but poignancy, too, was present in her carriage and phrasing. In this and other roles, her hair—hanging like a cloak to her hips—seemed as expressive an adjunct to her as a veil can be to a

Soviet ballerina. (I hope no one makes a Mélisande or Rapunzel ballet.) It added a whole extra layer to her account of the Strip Tease Girl in “Slaughter,” especially at her début performance; as she surged back and forth in La Fosse’s arms, it lashed down to the floor, then up and around—as fiery an afterbeat to her dancing as the tail to a comet. This was a thrillingly judged account: the sensual impishness of her first appearance gave you only the least whiff of her inflamed recklessness in the finale. She showed a yet keener differentiation (hair up) of the facets of her new roles in “Diamonds” and “Allegro Brillante.” With her, neither ballet is perfectly named, so far; there wasn’t yet, as there is now in her “Walpurgisnacht,” fully precise definition of all the allegro passages. But she has the ballets already in her grasp. In “Allegro Brillante,” every return to the stage showed her shading the role in a different hue. The spring season provided few pleasures as piercing as her slow walk forward on point in Lindsay Fischer’s arms in the “Diamonds” pas de deux—a progress in which she drew in one firm, grand arc the ballerina’s unfolding from bent-forward privacy into a radiant backbend, the feet plucking their way with steady purpose. As she rode the ensemble climax in the finale, those long, glowing legs shot out, leading her and the company forward in triumph. She is all of a piece: her radiance and her serenity were simply there in her stance as, in the pas de deux, she tenderly hailed Fischer from the opposite corner of the stage.

Other dancers. Fischer could be seen working steadily, usefully, into the repertory this season. He isn’t yet a stylist, but I watched him with respect. La Fosse, now in his third year at New York City Ballet, made a welcome contribution to everything he was given to do (I wish it had included more Balanchine). Because he is by instinct as much a performer as a dancer, his interpretations are occasionally a little too cute, but in ballets as different as the “ ‘Baiser’ Divertimento,” “Slaughter,” “Orpheus,” and “Brahms/Handel” he is an enlivening presence—lyrical, firm, committed. But there were few other dancers to single out for especial comment from the season, which was scarred by injury, illness, absence, and casting. (I regret that in reviewing Peter Martins’ Ray Charles work, “A Fool for You,” in the American Music Festival, I omitted to mention the best performance—that of the live Raeletts, with their slow-swinging, weighty rhythm, at the back of the stage.) Kyra Nichols, kept offstage by injury for much of the season’s central period, danced only one “Diamonds,” one “Liebeslieder Walzer,” and two “Walpurgisnacht”s—none of which I was able to see. She would have been more than welcome as Eurydice, as Terpsichore, and in “Gounod Symphony,” which are among the several suitable roles she has yet to dance. Her account of “Brahms/Handel” was blithely phenomenal. In “Raymonda Variations,” she gave two wholly sovereign performances. It seemed astonishing at the time, as it does in retrospect, that dancing can reach this peak of purity and inevitability, on the one hand, and, on the other, demonstrate such fullness and daring. Too bad that she danced only one of the ballerina’s two variations. “You don’t realize that Balanchine is dead,” I and others have been told. For those who cannot see how important, how moving, Kyra Nichols’ dancing is today in these ballets, Balanchine can never have been alive in the first place.

IT sometimes seemed this spring that all roads led to American Ballet Theatre. Whether the frame was the Balanchine repertory or Kirov tradition or Mark Morris’s choreography, A.B.T. was part of the picture. And performances during the recent season were such that, while remaining uneasy about the ambitions implicit in so catholic a repertory, I grew more and more aware of the company’s sense of connectedness to much that is best in dance today. Like Baryshnikov’s dancing, A.B.T. breaks down old categories. No, it doesn’t achieve all its goals. But you have only to be among the audience that warmly applauds in one evening what might once have been thought a chalk-and-cheese recipe—such as “Giselle” preceded by either Balanchine’s “Stravinsky Violin Concerto” or Morris’s “Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes”—to feel the beneficial effects of Baryshnikov’s regime.

In addition to Morris’s ballet, new works by Agnes de Mille and Clark Tippet were given that seemed to hark back to days of yore; and old ballets by Antony Tudor were revived. Why Tudor’s “Fandango”—a lame little inch of Spanish nothing forced to stretch for yards—was revived I can’t imagine; for those of us who hadn’t seen it, it added to our knowledge of the choreographer without raising our admiration. The same can’t be said for “Gala Performance,” Tudor’s 1938 satire of turn-of-the-century ballet and, in particular, of ballerinas from different nations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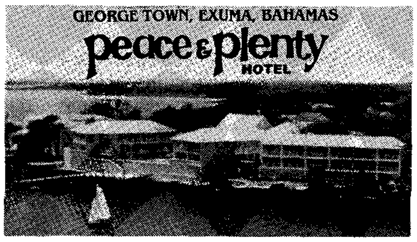

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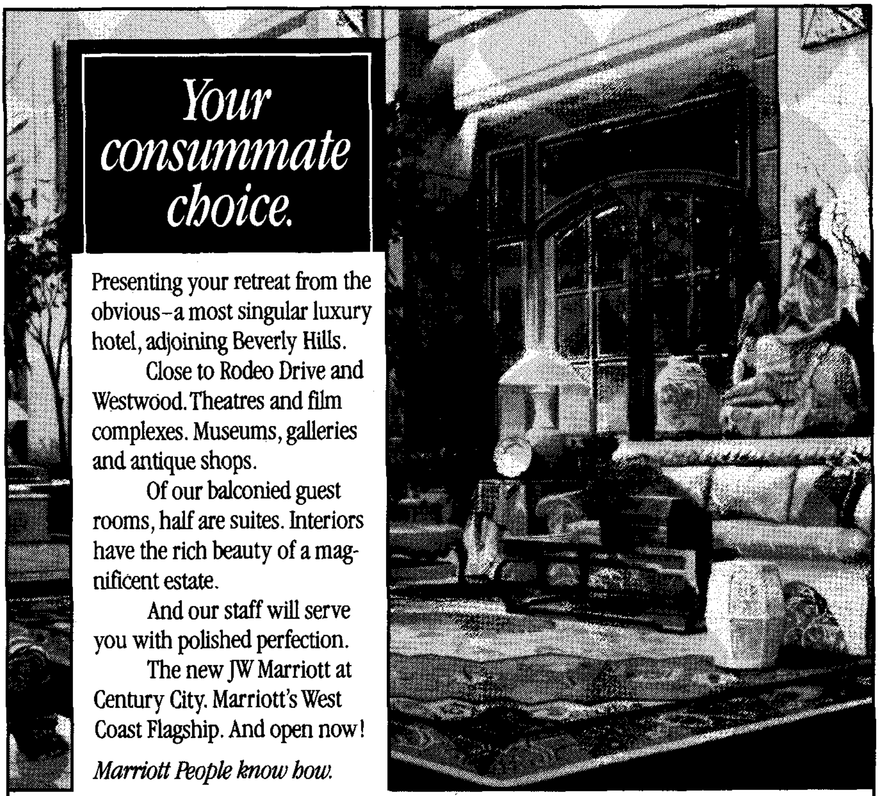
(Russia, Italy, France). The piece is full of attractive, odd, or clever detail—but it's too small-scale a collection of vignettes to fit happily on the Met stage. Satire was seldom in evidence; clowning often was. This process of coarsening, according to report, was already under way in the forties; but it's at odds with Tudor style, and it's also at odds with today's A.B.T. Clark Tippet's main offering for the season, "Bruch Violin Concerto No. 1," attempts to organize a soloist-and-corps choreographic structure along Balanchine lines (especially those of "Symphony in C" and "Ballet Imperial"), to create four entirely distinct ballerina roles for A.B.T.'s young female principals or leading soloists, and to deck those roles out with a few signature devices, in an apparent effort to recreate old-style A.B.T. stardom. The result is really just a hollow, inoffensive essay in ballet pomp. Like the male quartet, to barbershop music, that Tippet fashioned for the season's closing-night performance, it fell between several stools. In these works, each in a different genre, it's plain that Tippet—whose first ballet, "Enough Said," was shown last season—is enlarging his skills as a choreographer; but their dance material, for all that it's fairly congenial to the dancers, is never memorable. Agnes de Mille's new work, "The Informer," might have been made in the forties. Here she uses Irish folk dance not only to muster up background atmosphere for the tale of social pressure and private emotion that is her theme but also as the main dance idiom throughout. The parallel legs of the Irish jig and its long sequences of busily metric steps give the work a strong foundation. You felt the Dubliners' weight and insistence; in ensembles, a real driving spirit emerged. But the folk material serves less well as the plot draws further into violent emotion. De Mille adds a few extraneous steps, like double tours en l'air at points of climax (they make the protagonist, a "wounded veteran," look all too fit for action); and she employs mime gestures, most of which are too obscure or too crude to help the work as drama. The veteran's act of informing is just a big mimed shout into the wings. In the first cast, Victor Barbee gave a performance of moving integrity and detail; the work was well performed by all. My chief memory, however, is of that drumming footwork, which can say little but—again and again—"I am of Ireland, I am of Ireland."

I returned often this spring to watch A.B.T. If the wide repertory was my incentive, the quality of the dancing was my reward. The season was given consistency less by the company's senior stars (Baryshnikov, Cynthia Gregory, Martine van Hamel) than by the junior principals and soloists, who were seen in a variety of works. For a sure sign that this company is a haven for dancers, just see what has happened to Alessandra Ferri. Before leaving the Royal Ballet, in 1985, this talented dancer, with her Nastassja Kinski looks, had become mannered and self-indulgent. She would often dance with her mouth open (Marie Rambert voice: "Stop catching flies"), and came to rely too idly on natural sexiness and temperament—the Royal's Lolita. At A.B.T., she is growing into a valuable artist, a conscientious interpreter of ballerina and soloist roles. Turnout, speed, elevation: she has improved in all these departments. Though both her waist and the toes of those unforgettably arched feet haven't yet found all the strength they need, they're firmer, as is the whole tone of her dancing. As Juliet or Giselle or Nikiya, she performed full out in "takes" of limited duration, and then she would carry on—decisively but mutedly—until the flame reignited. In shorter roles, this was seldom true; and she was at her best in Tudor ballets. Her Youngest Sister in "Pillar of Fire," danced with liquid sensuality, was free of malice—innocently cruel. No one gave a sharper, more truly ballerina interpretation in "Gala Performance" than she did, as the flighty French étoile: I found myself turning my head to spot the members of the audience to whom she blew kisses.

Amanda McKerrow, despite her frail appearance, is a strong, exact dancer—exceptional in jumps and pirouettes. She could become the company's Patricia McBride; she's also surprisingly versatile. In "La Bayadère," she's an incisive, proud Gamzatti, in whose "catfight" mime scene with Ferri's Nikiya (as in Barbee's performances of either High Brahmin or Rajah in this ballet) there was the kind of characterful conviction in melodramatic gesture that I'd thought must have long vanished from the world. McKerrow hasn't yet found a way of giving inner life to Aurora in "The Sleeping Beauty;" and, though she's usually the company's most unobtrusively musical dancer, the way she pinned every step to the beat took any breath out of the phrases. Her combination of surface fragility and inner power makes her a heart-catching peasant Giselle; in her Wili existence beyond the grave I found her too doomed and penitential, despite individually ravishing sequences. Her birdlike, aerial account of the central pas de deux in "The Leaves Are Fading" is the opposite of Leslie Browne's fluent interpretation, and even more touching; her Youngest Sister in "Pillar," by contrast, has the dash of spite that Ferri's avoids. A pity, for her sake, that A.B.T. cancelled its performances of Balanchine's "Donizetti Variations." In "Stravinsky Violin Concerto," her purity, spontaneity, and vitality bring the Kay Mazzo role everything it needs; I saw no better Balanchine dancing at the Met this spring.

Julio Bocca—who played Albrecht to the Giselles of both Ferri and McKerrow, Romeo to Ferri's Juliet, and, in "La Bayadère," was the Solor divided between the two—is the most brilliant of the company's male dancers after Baryshnikov, and the most vivid. As Albrecht, he shoots like a rocket from his cottage door to Giselle's, and the same burning speed and force are present in all his dances. What makes this endearing is the lack of sophistication in his acting. He's just a hot-blooded kid, whose talent and temperament are perfectly fused. He, Ferri, and McKerrow aren't exceptions to the company rule. I admired Marianna Tcherkassky, Shawn Black, Ross Stretton, Robert Hill, Victor Barbee, Wes Chapman, Ethan Brown, Ricardo Bustamante, Johan Renvall, and John Gardner in almost all I saw them do. And although some of their colleagues are more inconsistent, and although I find Susan Jaffe's dancing monochrome and Cheryl Yeager's acting vulgar, I didn't see anyone disgrace the company's high standards. There were times throughout the season when I remembered why I don't consider A.B.T. one of the world's first-class companies—as when one conductor let the music peter out into nothing shortly after Aurora pricked her finger. But it was telling how often I forgot.

—ALASTAIR MACAULAY



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AMERICAN CHRONICLES

IT'S OUR NAME

JOHN HOULIHAN and Mike Heyer think of themselves as a couple of guys from Milwaukee trying to get by. They met in 1975, when Houlihan came up from Chicago to manage his in-laws' liquor store. It happened to be next door to Mike Heyer's grocery store—just off Green Tree Road, in a Milwaukee suburb called Glendale. Even before that, Heyer now says, "you could say that I knew him by reputation—his mother-in-law said he was a bum." (In his own defense, Houlihan notes that his mother-in-law has said that about any number of people.) They remember the precise moment of their meeting, because Heyer threw a salami at Houlihan. Having heard that the new manager of the liquor store had installed a sixty-gallon vat of salamis and summer sausages—in violation of an agreement limiting his food inventory to snacks—Heyer stormed in, picked up a salami, flung it at Houlihan, shouted, "Read your lease," and walked out. Houlihan was uninjured. The sausage issue was settled amicably, and after that, Heyer has said, "we just hit it off." For the next several years, their businesses thrived, and so did their friendship. They often advertised together—Green Tree Liquor and the Green Tree Market. They spent a lot of time together during business hours, chatting over coffee or taking a lunch break at a beer joint like the Fourth Base, in Pigsville. They had back-yard cookouts together, with their wives and families. And together, eventually, they realized that they were bored with what they were doing.

Heyer and Houlihan often speak of the widening of the road in front of their stores, in 1982, as the event that caused them to look around for something else. The new road swallowed up their most convenient parking—a dozen slots in front of the Green Tree Market alone. It also turned out to be part of a two- or three-year period of construction activity that transformed the area in front of their businesses into an obstacle course of ditches and bulldozers and detours. The construction was only the catalyst, though. Houlihan and Heyer were both getting restless. They were both in the vicinity of forty. They had both spent a number of years in family businesses they had tried to avoid.

"I always had a bad job sense," John Houlihan said recently, in explaining how he had happened to spend five weeks as sales-promotion manager of the Dietary Products Division of the American Hospital Supply Corporation. "I took the job because it was near my house." Houlihan, who started out in Chicago as an advertising copywriter, can tell tales of writing excruciatingly boring newsletters ("This company was doing a fabulous job with hydronic heating") and dealing with excruciatingly thick bosses ("It was like talking to a golden retriever"). In the early seventies, as a senior account executive for a company that managed trade associations, he had found himself the assistant director of the Pitless Adapter Division of the Water Systems Council. He'd answered another telephone as the director of the Ground Water Council, an organization that he describes, in conspiratorial tones, as "a front for the Pitless Adapter Division." All in all, he now says, "it was awful"—the sort of job that makes working for your in-laws look like a good career move.

Once Houlihan got Green Tree Liquor in the black, though, it was smooth sailing compared with life at the Green Tree Market. The grocery business is notorious for embodying just about every headache that exists in retail trade—dreadful hours that culminate in Saturday's being the busiest day of the week, endemic labor problems, spoilage. In the grocery business it's accepted that one measure of a man's success is raising a son with enough sense to go into another line of work. Heyer's father was a grocer. He owned a couple of supermarkets in addition to the Green Tree Market—a rather old-fashioned grocery store that specialized in quality meats and maintained charge accounts and included among its loyal customers a class of people that in Milwaukee, alone among American cities, could be referred to as "the families that owned the breweries." On Mike Heyer's mother's side—the Ignatowskis—he had several uncles who ran mom-and-pop groceries on the Polish south side. In other words, he knew enough to know better. After college, at Northern Michigan University, he had a

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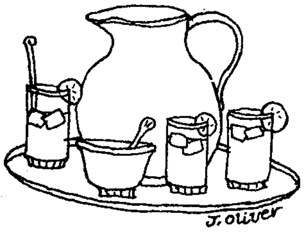
factory job with Continental Can for a while, and then examined warranty claims for American Motors for a while, and was selling cigarettes for R. J. Reynolds when his father offered him thirty dollars more a week to work at the Green Tree Market. Eventually, Heyer bought out his father, expanded the operation, and, in 1977, bought and completely remodelled a large supermarket in a shopping center farther north. Less than a year later, the new supermarket burned to the ground. The fire, Mike Heyer has said, "sort of took the heart out of me as far as the grocery business was concerned."



Without any formal discussion of the subject, it became apparent that John Houlihan and Mike Heyer would sooner or later go into some business together. They have a characteristic often found in natural partners: they get along, but they're not alike. Heyer seems to find relaxation in activities that require prolonged concentration. He enjoys wallpapering so much that he wallpapered Houlihan's entire house, leaving Houlihan appreciative but slightly puzzled. During the winter, he spends a lot of his time at the sport of curling—which Houlihan, who has seen one match, seems to consider slightly less interesting than watching someone apply wallpaper to a wall. Heyer is the sort of person who might make a project of redoing a wooden deck that seems to be coming apart; Houlihan, who doesn't own any tools, would probably find more pleasure in writing a creatively abusive letter to the contractor who didn't do it right the first time. They didn't have to discuss who would do what in any business they might tackle. When it came to money, for instance, Houlihan would obviously make the pitch to the bankers and Heyer would obviously handle the books.

They looked at a bar or two—Houlihan says that owning a bar sounded like a perfect excuse to stay out late having a few beers—but they didn't find anything that seemed just right. Then Heyer was invited downtown to discuss the possibility of putting a food market into Grand Avenue, a huge multilevel shopping mall that the Rouse Corporation was building in a way that connected two existing department stores. Houlihan went along. They both thought that the food market was a dumb idea. "We couldn't see people wandering around downtown carrying a pot roast," Houlihan has said—particularly at the prices that Grand Avenue rents would necessitate. But Houlihan and Heyer noticed that the mall was also to have a "food court," called the Speisegarten—an area where office workers and downtown shoppers could collect a bratwurst sandwich here and a burrito there and repair to a table for lunch. There were only two food-stand areas left to lease, but no beer operation had been arranged for. In a city where it is not unusual to come across an intersection that has corner taverns on all four corners, that seemed to Heyer and Houlihan an oversight that begged for correction.

They envisioned a standup bar operation that would serve a dozen different draught beers—drawn from showy-looking brass taps—and a few dozen beers in the bottle. The Rouse people liked the idea. A lot of other people didn't. There was betting around town that Grand Avenue was going to be a turkey—partly because it was being built on the wrong side of the river that cuts through downtown Milwaukee. Some people thought there was no way for a beer stand to do the volume necessary to pay the rent. After a few minutes with a calculator had indicated that the place was going to have to sell forty-two beers an hour, Heyer and Houlihan weren't absolutely certain themselves, but they wanted to give it a try.

"Our wives were for it," Heyer said recently. "They said, 'You guys have been stuck in this rut for so long. Go ahead and do it and get it out of your system.' " Heyer and Houlihan put in five thousand dollars each to form a corporation—it was called the Carrie Beverage Corporation, since each partner had a daughter by that name—and borrowed ninety thousand from a bank. The Milwaukee Brew House was one of the names suggested, and so was A Hundred Bottles of Beer. The name they finally settled on, though, was mentioned during a Fourth of July cookout by a friend of Heyer's who's an executive at Wisconsin Electric—a man who believed that Grand Avenue

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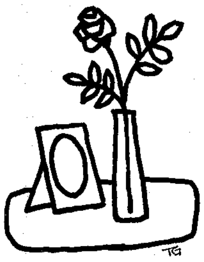
was destined to succeed. He suggested that the two partners simply combine their names to create what sounded like an ideal name for an Irish pub: Mike Houlihan's. It opened under that name in October of 1982. From the start, there was no doubt that Grand Avenue was going to be a prosperous operation, and that Mike Houlihan's was going to sell beer at a rate considerably higher than forty-two an hour. The partners were relieved and delighted. They even allowed themselves to contemplate the possibility that what they had opened was the first of many Mike Houlihan's. It took a while for them to do No. 2, but that opened in Minneapolis almost exactly two years later, in a downtown mall similar to Grand Avenue. A couple of weeks before the Minneapolis opening, the owners of Mike Houlihan's received a letter from Steve Thompson, an officer of the Gilbert/Robinson Corporation, a restaurant concern that was then a subsidiary of W. R. Grace & Company. "We have a federal registration on the name Houlihan's and operate 44 of them throughout the Continental United States," Thompson said. He insisted that the name Mike Houlihan's be changed.

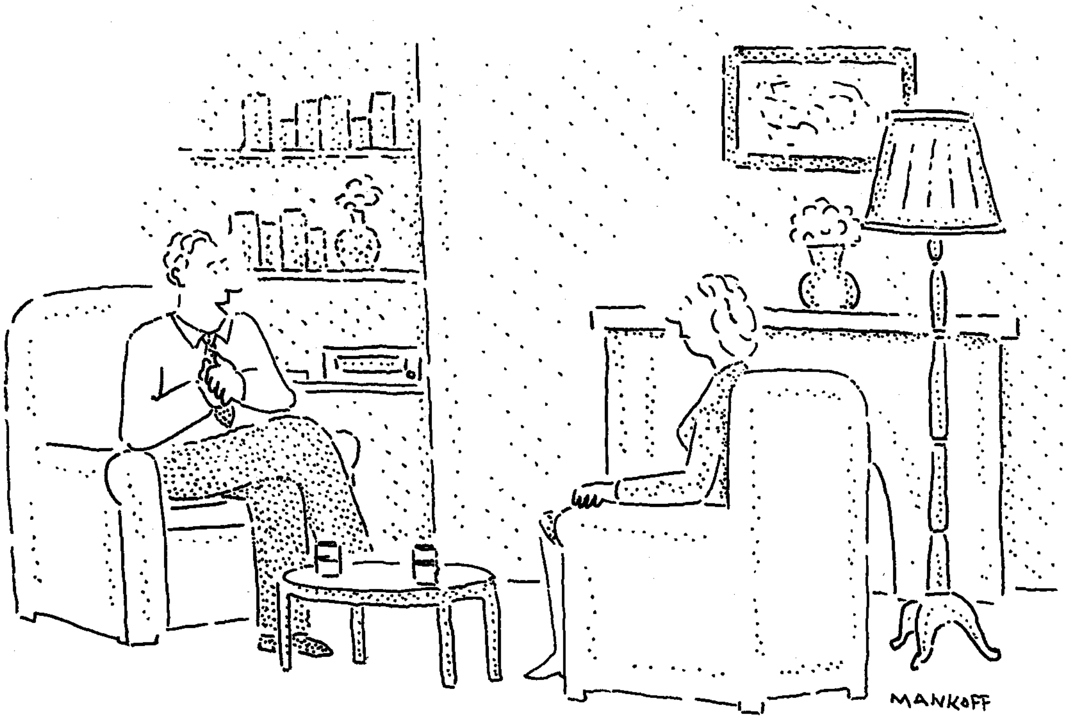


THE crisis blew over rather easily. Someone from the Milwaukee law firm that represented the partnership phoned a Grace lawyer mentioned in Thompson's letter to explain that Mike Houlihan's could hardly be confused with a restaurant—it served no food; it didn't even have any place to sit—and nothing more was heard from Gilbert/Robinson or Grace. The other problems with the Minneapolis operation, though, were harder to solve. The Minneapolis shopping center didn't have the traffic that Grand Avenue attracted, and the Minneapolis attitude toward drinking in public turned out to be seriously different from the attitude that Heyer and Houlihan were accustomed to in Milwaukee. "We had checked the figures for liquor consumption in Minneapolis, and it was enormous," Houlihan said recently. "We didn't realize that they consumed it in the basement, with the door closed and the lights off." Simply getting a liquor license in Minneapolis turned out to be an extremely complicated and expensive operation, and it finally came with so many restrictions that a huge sign was required simply to explain all the rules. One of the rules prohibited carrying beer to the tables in the food court. A few days before Mike Houlihan's opened in Minneapolis, the largest employer of office workers in the adjoining high rises sent around a memo announcing that management did not expect to see any of its employees standing around a bar in the middle of the day. At a time when Mike Houlihan's in Milwaukee was grossing about a quarter of a million dollars a year, Mike Houlihan's in Minneapolis opened with first-day receipts of seventy-eight dollars.

That inauspicious beginning was all the more troubling to Heyer and Houlihan because it followed another business venture that Heyer has described succinctly as "one disaster after another." Only a few months after the first Mike Houlihan's opened, the Rouse Corporation asked Heyer and Houlihan if they'd be interested in opening up a seafood restaurant in Grand Avenue. The Rouse people pointed to the success of the Phillips Harborplace, which is the main seafood restaurant in a Rouse development in Baltimore—presumably not dwelling on the fact that Baltimore, unlike Milwaukee, happens to be next to the seafood supply, or the fact that the Phillips family has been in the seafood-restaurant business for thirty years. Houlihan and Heyer had never been in the restaurant business at all—which may explain why it took them a while to figure out that their restaurant, the Palm Garden Terrace, had so little room for customers that its income couldn't exceed its overhead even when it was full.

Running the Palm Garden Terrace was not completely without its rewards. For one thing, Houlihan says, "I could be the loan officer for fish restaurants at any bank in the country." Also, the partners were left with a full fund of disaster stories: the day they found out how much the fancy new ceiling was going to cost; the table umbrella that blew off the terrace and almost impaled a man who was walking down Wisconsin Avenue ("He came up carrying this thing, and the manager threatened to have him arrested for stealing it"); the huge fat lady who fell through a chair ("All of a sudden, we heard people yell, 'She's down! She's down!' ") and could not be moved (that one had a silver lining, since at least one customer finally got a good look at the ceiling); the piano player whose response to requests was to say he knew that song but didn't want to play it. Houlihan's favorite Palm Garden Terrace story concerns the chef who threatened suicide, told tales of having been held captive by a wicked brother-in-law, and, most serious of all, was sending out grilled-cheese sandwiches at lunch without any cheese. "Finally, we had to fire him," Houlihan said recently. "And when he wanted to come back we said the only way we'd hire him back is if he brought a letter from a psychologist saying he wasn't nuts. We made an appointment for him with a guy at Marquette. So he comes back, and he gives us the letter, and he says he's ready to go back to work. Except the letter says he's nuts. So I said, 'Well, this is not the letter we discussed . . .' " Toward the end of the Palm Garden Terrace's life—it closed just a few months after Mike Houlihan's opened in Minneapolis—the partners were saving money by having their wives make bar hors d'oeuvres and launder napkins at home. It must not have seemed totally funny at the time, although Heyer and Houlihan still start laughing when they recall the earnest investor who thought long and hard about what might be done to save a failing seafood restaurant and finally said, "Maybe you ought to serve rabbit."

The Minneapolis branch of Mike Houlihan's, which closed in the fall of 1985, made two debacles in a row. The Mike Houlihan's in Milwaukee was still doing good business, though, and the partners were still convinced that it was an operation that could be repeated elsewhere. A college roommate of Houlihan's who worked in mergers and acquisitions for a large corporation agreed; his interpretation of the back-to-back disasters that had made life harrowing for the Houlihan and Heyer families was "All you've got is a financial problem." He put the partners in touch with a New York financier named Dan Sullivan, who is normally spoken of by Houlihan as "the only Irish venture capitalist," and Sullivan proposed an arrangement for underwriting what was envisioned as a chain of Mike Houlihan's—or at least enough of them to interest the acquisition people of a conglomerate. By the time they met with Sullivan, Houlihan and Heyer were arranging to open a Mike Houlihan's in St. Louis, a traditional beer town, where no employer would think of cautioning his employees against having something cold to wash down their lunch. Houlihan and Heyer had been invited to St. Louis by the Rouse people to attend a huge launch party for a shopping-mall development Rouse was doing in the old Union Station. They had spent most of the evening in a group that included Paul Wong, who runs Wong's Wok at Grand Avenue, and Jim Malone, an acquaintance of Wong's who grew up in Milwaukee but was practicing law in St. Louis, and a man named Gerry Munson, who, it turned out, was the rental agent for a rival shopping-mall project, called St. Louis Centre.



"Look, all I'm asking is that we let market forces bring a greater degree of efficiency into our marriage."

• •

Munson suggested, and Malone agreed, that St. Louis Centre was more the sort of place for a Mike Houlihan's. Unlike Union Station, a spectacularly designed collection of restaurants and specialty stores, which was meant to be what shopping-mall people sometimes call "an experience," St. Louis Centre was similiar in design and strategy to Grand Avenue—a daytime shopping center connecting two existing department stores. With financial backing from Houlihan's brother, a lawyer in Chicago, the partners leased a spot right in the center of the food court, and it was a hit from the start—nine thousand dollars' worth of business the first day it was open. With Milwaukee still doing well and negotiations proceeding with the only Irish venture capitalist, Houlihan and Heyer would have been confident that they were back on the track except for one unexpected development. The night before the opening, when Heyer himself was finishing the carpentry on the St. Louis Mike Houlihan's, he was called to the telephone. It was Steve Thompson of Gilbert/Robinson, and he was complaining again about the name. In a follow-up letter, he said that Mike Houlihan's was an infringement on the rights that Gilbert/Robinson had established to call restaurants Houlihan's Old Place or Houlihan's. He said that there had already been confusion with a Houlihan's operated by Gilbert/Robinson in a St. Louis suburb and there was bound to be more confusion when Gilbert/Robinson opened another Houlihan's, "a few blocks from your operation"—in Union Station.

Although the partners referred the letter to their lawyers in Milwaukee, John Houlihan presented Thompson with some arguments of his own. "I believe that many Irish Americans and the American public, including a broad segment of your present customer base, would share my view that the W. R. Grace Co. does not '*own*' a prominent Irish surname that far predates your restaurant activities," Houlihan wrote. "I think you might be amazed at the number of people from all walks of life—TV reporters, newspaper columnists, trade unionists, legal scholars, even casual restaurant patrons—who believe their names belong to them." The answer from Gilbert/Robinson was filed in federal district court in St. Louis on October 16, 1985—a "complaint for service mark infringement" that included all sorts of language about punitive damages and treble damages and reimbursement of legal costs. Heyer requires only one sentence to sum up the way he and Houlihan felt at that point: "We were scared to death."

They decided to change the name. It wasn't that John Houlihan was at all pleased to be told that some corporation owned the rights to what he referred to as his "prominent Irish surname." He was furious. He saw the Gilbert/Robinson lawsuit as an attempt to rob him of the right to use his own name in his own business. As it happens, though, that is not a right unconditionally recognized in American trademark law. A simple surname isn't the easiest sort of business title to register with the Trademark and Patent Office—one reason being precisely the possibility that others of that name might want to go into the same business—but once the mark is registered the actual name of the person who infringes on it is irrelevant. Someone who opened a hamburger stand called McDonald's would find retribution from the golden-arches crowd no less swift because he happened to come from a long line of people named McDonald. Lawsuits claiming infringe-

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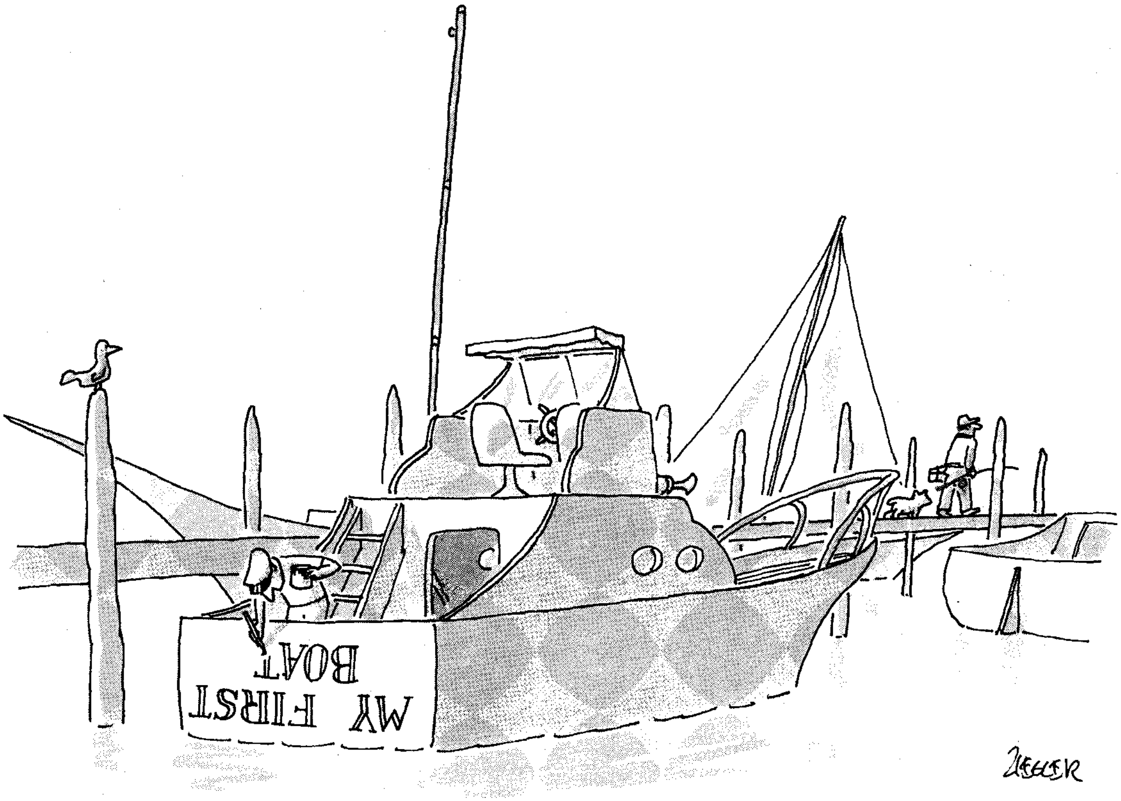
ment of trademark—or service mark, as it's called in a retail business such as a restaurant—are normally decided on the simple question of whether the names are close enough to cause some of the mark holder's customers to spend some of their money with the interlopers out of honest confusion.

Mike Houlihan's could, in fact, base a defense on that theory: How could a shopping-mall bar that didn't even own a bar stool be confused with a full-service restaurant? The defense could also argue what lawyers call estoppel—that Gilbert/Robinson had, in effect, acquiesced in the presence of Mike Houlihan's by having permitted it to exist so long without objection. Except for a letter that seemed to have been taken care of by one telephone call, the Minneapolis operation had operated for a year with no complaints from Gilbert/Robinson. There had never been any complaints from Gilbert/Robinson about the Mike Houlihan's that had been open since 1982 in Milwaukee, even though Gilbert/Robinson operates a Houlihan's in the Milwaukee suburbs. Heyer and Houlihan were told by their lawyer, a trademark specialist in the firm that had represented them in Milwaukee, that such arguments might even prevail in court, assuming that the partners didn't run out of money long before they got to court. A corporation the size of W. R. Grace & Company could simply keep the meter running. Heyer and Houlihan might spend tens of thousands of dollars on the chance of avoiding a name change that was not in fact terribly difficult to make. Mike Houlihan's business was not yet based on name recognition, and there weren't enough signs and glasses and napkins and matchbooks to make the cost of changing them prohibitive. Houlihan told the lawyer to begin talks with the Gilbert/Robinson lawyers—they were from Pattishall, McAuliffe & Hofstetter, a prominent firm of trademark specialists in Chicago—and the negotiations quickly got down to how long Mike Houlihan's would be given to use up its supplies and change the Houlihan name.

But John Houlihan couldn't rid himself of the feeling that there was something shameful about allowing a corporation to take away his name. His father didn't like it. His children didn't like it. Still, it was apparent that settling with Gilbert/Robinson was the sensible course. Houlihan tried to make choosing a new name into a sort of game with his family. "I said, 'This is going to be fun,' " he recalled recently. "My daughter Kerry—she was about ten then—said, 'No, it isn't.' We thought of a couple of names, mostly just other Irish names. And then Kerry started crying. She said, 'It's our name!' "

A FEW days later, Jim Malone, the lawyer Heyer and Houlihan had met in St. Louis through Paul Wong, got a call from John Houlihan. Malone is a single practitioner in his thirties who does mainly trial work—personal-injury, criminal, divorce. He had become friendly with the partners—they are all Milwaukee Brewers fans—and he had done some minor legal work for the St. Louis Centre version of Mike Houlihan's. Although Malone was under no illusions about anyone's having an inherent right to name a business after himself, he was strongly sympathetic with Houlihan's position in the trademark-infringement case. He seems to have a natural inclination for taking the side of anyone locked in a dispute with a much more powerful adversary, and, of course, he had a prominent Irish surname himself. On the telephone, Houlihan said that, after some reflection, he simply couldn't bring himself to settle with Gilbert/Robinson. He wanted Malone to take the case. Malone said that the disadvantage Mike Houlihan's already had in battling a huge conglomerate would only be compounded by facing a large firm of trademark specialists with a single lawyer who had never handled a trademark case in his life. Houlihan thought that Malone connected with the case in a way that was more important than a grounding in trademark law. It wasn't that Malone disagreed with the advice given by the partners' Milwaukee firm. He, too, thought that a defense against a corporation the size of Grace would be an enormous financial drain. He agreed that Houlihan and Heyer wouldn't be giving up commercial name identity of great value if they simply changed the name of their beer stands. "The 'identity' was all in John's mind," Malone has said. "But, when all was said and done, that was the most important thing of all, because *it was really in his mind.*" Malone finally said that he would take the case.



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He found that he was not going to be left to man the barricades alone: John Houlihan still had his typewriter. Houlihan had a lot to say—about a trademark law that would prevent someone from using his own name, about a legal system that allowed large corporations to bully small businessmen into submission through prolonged litigation—and he said it to just about everyone he could think of. Partly, of course, he was hoping that he could embarrass W. R. Grace & Company into some sort of compromise. Large corporations don't embarrass easily, but it's not unprecedented. In 1981, the British-American Tobacco Company, which then owned Gimbels department store, filed a copyright-infringement suit demanding that Jack Gimbel, the proprietor of Gimbel & Sons Country Store, in Boothbay Harbor, Maine, change the name of his business. The eventual out-of-court settlement—Gimbel & Son began displaying a sign that said what must have been apparent to just about anyone: it was not associated with Gimbels department store—presumably came about partly because of press accounts of Yankee neighbors rallying to Jack Gimbel's defense and British-American Tobacco spokesmen trying, without much success, not to look silly. But Houlihan also had something else in mind. He knew that J. Peter Grace, the chairman of W. R. Grace & Company, was a prominent Roman Catholic layman—a descendant of potato-famine Irish immigrants. Houlihan genuinely believed that if a man like J. Peter Grace found out what was going on in one of the outposts of his empire he "would realize how absolutely silly it was and would end the lawsuit, and we could all go on with our lives."

Houlihan wrote to his congressman, Jim Moody. He wrote to other people's congressmen. He wrote to senators. He wrote to Cardinal O'Connor, of New York ("as one Irish American to another"), and to Cardinal May, of St. Louis, asking that they intercede with J. Peter Grace. Houlihan's letters to public figures touched off a lot more correspondence—a letter from the Trademark and Patent Office explaining to Senator Bill Bradley what the law said about the use of your own surname on a business, a letter from J. Peter Grace to Senator Jesse Helms explaining W. R. Grace's obligation to police its trademarks, a letter to J. Peter Grace from Jim Moody saying that it was pretty shabby behavior to answer a personal letter from a congressman with a form letter, particularly a form letter of such shallowness.

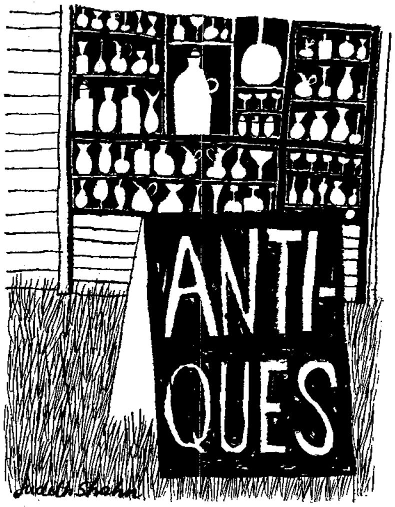
By chance, Houlihan's father, who's retired in Chicago, had once responded to the sort of mail solicitation that offers, for something like twenty-four dollars and ninety-five cents, to provide a book that includes the coat of arms and glorious history of the recipient's surname (even if it happens to be a surname that the recipient's father made up on the spot at Ellis Island), and the book turned out to have in it a computer printout that gave the names and addresses of about twelve hundred Houlihans in the United States. John Houlihan wrote to them all. The envelope gave some hint of his tone: it said, in large black letters, "SCREAM BLOODY MURDER!!!" In his letter Houlihan said, "The purpose of this letter is to make you and your family aware of what is at stake—your good name. Based on precedents established in this case, *your children, grandchildren, and their children may never be able to use their name, Houlihan,* in a retail business. This is absolutely astounding to me!" Houlihan said he wanted help—not financial help but help in publicizing the story, and moral support, and, of course, letters to J. Peter Grace. The Houlihans responded the way John Houlihan had thought they might: they screamed bloody murder.

"What Gilbert/Robinson Inc. is attempting to do smacks of the worst sort of legal/financial bullying imaginable," a Houlihan from Ohio wrote Grace. "I have faith that the judicial system will vindicate the people (Houlihan and Heyer) under attack. I hope that in their vindication, *your* family name is not besmirched." Houlihans wrote to defend their right to use their own name ("To claim that a man may not use his surname for his place of business is insulting, stupid, and ignorant"), and to say that they would never again enter a Houlihan's Old Place restaurant, and to make claims for the clan's historic nobility. "I have watched, sadly, how your people have trivialized my family name with your silly, tasteless restaurants,” one Houlihan said in a letter to Steve Thompson, of Gilbert/Robinson. “The name Houlihan was the name of an Irish king at a time when the Thompsons were painting their faces blue and living in caves.”

Jim Malone had limited enthusiasm for John Houlihan’s letter-writing campaign, but he did express some interest in a letter Houlihan got in response to a piece the Kansas City *Times* ran about it. The letter was from a man in Kansas City named William F. Meiners, Jr. It said, “I thought you might be interested to know that neither my uncle, Tom Houlihan (nor his descendants), from whom Gilbert/Robinson ‘borrowed the Houlihan name,’ was ever paid for the use of his name on the nationwide Houlihan bar and restaurant chain which began on the Country Club Plaza in 1972.” Malone had a copy of the paperwork surrounding Gilbert/Robinson’s original application for service-mark registration, in 1976—in which the examiner specifically requested either a statement that the name “Houlihan” in “Houlihan’s Old Place” “did not refer to any particular living individual” or a statement from the individual granting permission for its use. The reply to the examiner from Gilbert/Robinson was “The name in the mark is fictitious and not a reference to any living individual.”

IT had seemed such a good idea at the time. In 1972, Gilbert/Robinson itself wasn’t many years away from being a couple of guys from Kansas City trying to get by. Joe Gilbert, Sr., had been a restaurant man old-fashioned enough to put his own name on his restaurant; Joe Gilbert’s was the main restaurant at the Kansas City Municipal Airport for years. In the early sixties, Gilbert and his son joined forces with Paul Robinson, who had been the manager of a well-known steak restaurant called The Golden Ox, and in the next decade Gilbert/Robinson opened several restaurants in Kansas City, concentrating on places that had “a look” of one sort or another. The restaurant that the company was about to open in 1972, in a store on the plaza that had been occupied for many years by Tom Houlihan’s Mens Wear, was to be finished in dark wood, with a lot of old advertising signs and green fluted lampshades and what a Gilbert/Robinson executive has called “kind of an Old World English-Irish sort of bar feel to it.” When Gilbert/Robinson people were asked where their new restaurant was, they would say, “In Houlihan’s old place,” and it finally occurred to somebody that the description would do beautifully as a name—a name that not only told people where the restaurant was but also had the connotation of an Irish bar, instantly aged. The story of how Houlihan’s Old Place got its name was a familiar anecdote in Kansas City. Malone found any number of references to it in Gilbert/Robinson press releases and trade-magazine articles and W. R. Grace & Company’s own house organ (“He may have been only a Kansas City, Missouri, haberdasher, but the late Tom Houlihan’s name is becoming renowned throughout the nation”).

One of the trade-magazine articles said that Gilbert/Robinson saw an additional value to the name because “Houlihan was quite a character and well-known about the Plaza.” Tom Houlihan was what used to be called a man-about-town. The son of Irish immigrants—his father kept a saloon, presumably called Houlihan’s—he married the daughter of Tom Pendergast, the political boss of Kansas City. His wife died young, and as a single man in his middle years Houlihan, in the words of his daughter, “had a nice time for himself.” He was a friend of Joe Gilbert’s, and it seems clear that he gave his informal permission for the use of his name on the original Houlihan’s Old Place. If it had all ended there, Gilbert/Robinson might not have bothered to apply for a federal registration; the name would have been protected in Kansas City simply by use. But within a year there was a Houlihan’s Old Place in New Orleans—the first restaurant that Gilbert/Robinson had ever opened outside Kansas City. Within a few years, it was obvious that Houlihan’s Old Place was a restaurant that could be repeated in any number of cities, and that Gilbert/Robinson ought to have a federal registration of the name in order to provide a sort of preëmptive clout in new territories. Houlihan’s Old Place—or Houlihan’s, as the restaurants were increasingly known—had become, in the words of a Gilbert/Robinson executive named Richard C. May, “the hottest thing going in the restaurant business.”



Gilbert/Robinson has since launched a number of other concepts, as it calls them—Annie’s Santa Fe, Fred P. Ott’s Bar & Hamburger Business, Fedora’s, Sam Wilson’s Meat Market, Alice Wong’s—but more than half of its annual sales still come from Houlihan’s. Largely on the strength of Houlihan’s, Gilbert/Robinson’s corporate life has amounted to a sort of micro-history of the era when American companies began behaving like transformer toys. First, the partnership went public. Then the public company became the wholly owned subsidiary of a conglomerate, W. R. Grace & Company. Eventually, through a leveraged buyout of the Grace food division by its executives, the wholly owned subsidiary became part of an entirely new company—Restaurant Enterprises Group, Inc., a California-based corporation whose minority stockholder is W. R. Grace & Company. Through it all, Houlihan’s kept pulling in the customers. There are now fifty-five Houlihan’s around the country, doing more than a hundred million dollars’ worth of business a year.

Nobody claims that Tom Houlihan gave his permission for all that. In fact, his daughter, Carol Houlihan Whittaker, says that he was disappointed until the day he died that he never received any compensation for the use of his name—although she does not deny that he remained friendly with Joe Gilbert, Sr., until Gilbert’s death. After Tom Houlihan’s death, Mrs. Whittaker made one attempt to get some compensation herself. A lawyer she knew wrote to Gilbert/Robinson demanding twenty-five thousand dollars for the use of the Houlihan name.

It was perhaps not the most subtle approach, but the response, by Steve Thompson, took a tone that even John Houlihan might have found a bit truculent. Calling the demand outrageous, Thompson wrote, "I can only say that Gilbert/Robinson's use of a deceased clothier's surname in the name of our restaurant entitles your client to absolutely nothing. The late Tom Houlihan's rights, if any, died when he did and surnames aren't protectable anyway."

Just when Tom Houlihan died was precisely what interested Jim Malone, and he dredged up an obituary from the Kansas City *Star*. Houlihan, it turned out, had died in December of 1976—eight months after Gilbert/Robinson assured the Trademark and Patent Office that the Houlihan of Houlihan's Old Place was fictitious and did not refer to any living person. When John Houlihan's friend in mergers and acquisitions heard about that turn of events, he said to Houlihan, "Well, if you can't get smart, get lucky." Malone decided to countersue. He claimed that Gilbert/Robinson had caused his clients all sorts of troubles—legal expenses, a lost opportunity for expansion with the only Irish venture capitalist, distraction from their business—by threatening them with a registered trademark that turned out to have been registered through fraud.

ON the theory that a trademark-infringement suit would obviously be affected by whether or not the trademark registration in question had been found fraudulent, Federal District Judge Stephen N. Limbaugh eventually ruled that Malone's countersuit would be heard first, but it was clear from the start that a lot of motions would be made and answered before the case ever got to a courtroom. The Gilbert/Robinson lawyers, in Malone's words, "filed everything under the sun." Both sides took a lot of depositions. Lawyers travelled to Milwaukee and St. Louis and Kansas City and Houston. The pile of transcripts and motions and responses and memorandums got to be about a foot thick. Malone tried to keep expenses down—"You should see the hotels this guy would stay in," Houlihan has said, in the same tone he might use to describe Heyer's willingness to spend hours at a curling match—but the costs passed the fifty thousand dollars that someone had predicted, and kept mounting. The partners' families found that they liked the lawsuit even less than they had liked the Palm Garden Terrace—and not just because of the financial drain. It had always been possible to see an end to the Palm Garden Terrace—when the money ran out, it would close—but the lawsuit seemed endless. Family plans changed constantly as trial dates were set and then postponed. It was not easy to ignore the possibility that Houlihan and Heyer might simply have got in over their heads. By the time the trial of Malone's countersuit actually began, in St. Louis, last fall—two years after Gilbert/Robinson's original complaint—the wife of one of the partners had hives and the other partner's wife was taking tranquilizers.

Malone had done an extraordinary amount of work. He had tracked down Carol Houlihan Whittaker, and some of the people who wrote early pieces about how Houlihan's Old Place was named, and two or three people who jousted with Gilbert/Robinson over the name before Mike Houlihan's came on the scene. He had answered a blizzard of motions from Pattishall, McAuliffe & Hofstetter, including several that were filed the week before the trial began. He had blocked Gilbert/Robinson's attempt to register the name Houlihan's, as opposed to Houlihan's Old Place—a registration that, it turned out, the company had not bothered to apply for until after the lawsuit began. He had worked with his clients on their testimony, sometimes playing the role of a particularly nasty cross-examiner. He thought he was prepared, and he had one advantage that can be more important to a trial lawyer than unlimited budgets or large staffs—a theme. He could build his evidence around the theme of a big corporation bullying two guys from Milwaukee who were just trying to get by.

Still, Heyer often woke up at three in the morning in his hotel room soaking wet with perspiration and lay awake the rest of the night. It had never really occurred to Heyer not to join Houlihan in a fight over a name identity that was, in Malone's words, "all in John's mind." ("We're partners," Heyer once said, when asked why he would go through so much trouble for a prominent Irish surname not his own. "I guess you could say it was loyalty—or maybe, considering the circumstances,

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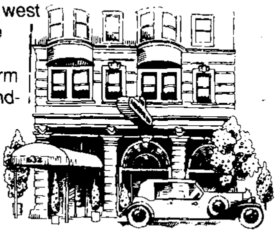

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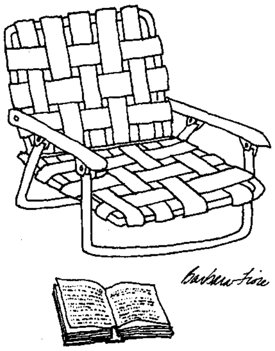
'blind loyalty' would be a better term.") But he had moments of panic, and so did Houlihan. They couldn't rid themselves of the notion that the other side—the powerful law firm hired by the powerful corporation—knew something that John Houlihan and Mike Heyer, and even Jim Malone, didn't know. They kept thinking that the other side had "a smoking gun."

They must have been cheered by the opening statements. The Gilbert/Robinson lawyer presented some impressive arguments—he explained how "fictitious" could mean any number of things in the context of trademark law, for instance, and how a trade name could be protected by use even without registration—but they were legal arguments. Jim Malone was able to tell a story. It was an interesting story, about a couple of guys named Mike and John who together opened a little bar ("probably no wider than perhaps the judge's podium up here") and found their livelihoods threatened by a gigantic corporation wielding a registration it had obtained with a flat-out lie. Then, with witnesses and documents and the reading of depositions, he took three days to tell the story again, in greater detail. It was still an interesting story. Malone demonstrated that Gilbert/Robinson, even as its federal registration application was being processed, in 1976, had found itself having to pay off proprietors of similarly named restaurants in states where it wanted to expand. As Malone told the story, Gilbert/Robinson—realizing that it badly needed a federal registration, and realizing that Tom Houlihan was likely to want a serious cut for stating that "the hottest thing going in the restaurant business" had permission to use his name—decided simply to tell a lie that was unlikely ever to be discovered. In fact, Malone said, the scheme had worked for a decade, until Gilbert/Robinson had the bad luck to run into a stubborn man named John Houlihan. Malone didn't claim that John Houlihan had any inherent right to use his name, but Houlihan himself seemed loath to leave that point out of the proceedings.



"The name Houlihan had, I think, a little more significance than maybe a lot of names would have to most people," he testified when Malone asked him why he refused to acquiesce in Gilbert/Robinson's demands. "Houlihan is a very well-known and very well-respected name in Ireland. I'm of Irish-American descent. The theme song of the Easter Rebellion, which was the revolution in Ireland, was a song called 'Kathleen ni Houlihan.' It's a great name, and it's a shame that we have to sit in here—"

"Well, John," Malone said, holding up his hand as if to stop the flow. "I'm just asking you did you ever intend to drop the name?"

The point the Gilbert/Robinson lawyers made again and again was that there had been no intent to defraud anybody. As David C. Hilliard, the principal courtroom lawyer for Gilbert/Robinson, analyzed the story presented by Jim Malone and Richard Haferkamp, a young trademark lawyer Malone had retained to help him, "they see everything that's been done here as an effort to hurt somebody, when the facts are that what's happening here is a business doing business, and there's nobody going after anybody." Hilliard presented a former United States Commissioner of Trademarks and Patents to testify, in direct contradiction to the trademark lawyer Malone had called as an expert witness, that it was reasonable for the lawyer who filed the original registration documents for Gilbert/Robinson (a man who was no longer alive) to interpret the regulations in a way that would justify calling the Houlihan in "Houlihan's Old Place" fictitious. The Gilbert/Robinson lawyers said that the enormous success the company had made out of its Houlihan's Old Place concept had nothing to do with Tom Houlihan. In Kansas City, Gilbert/Robinson certainly wasn't trading on any reputation Tom Houlihan had as a restaurant proprietor—and he had given his permission to use his name for that restaurant anyway. In fifty or so other cities that have Houlihan's restaurants, nobody had ever heard of Tom Houlihan. Hilliard contended that Mike Houlihan's expansion deal with Dan Sullivan had been sidetracked by a disagreement over majority control rather than by the lawsuit, and that whatever problems the lawsuit brought had come not from Gilbert/Robinson but from the refusal of Houlihan and Heyer to recognize a legitimately established service mark. They presented any number of arguments to back their contention that there hadn't been any fraud, but the smoking gun that Houlihan and Heyer had dreaded never appeared.

The evidence had come in so well for Malone, in fact, that he thought he might hear some talk from the other side about the possibility of making a settlement before the jury got the case. When the trial was nearly over, he got a hint that such an offer was about to be made, and he asked Heyer and Houlihan to think carefully that evening about the minimum amount they would accept as a settlement. "The next morning, they said they had given that a lot of thought," Malone said recently. "They said they had walked the streets for hours talking about it. So I asked them what figure they had come up with, and they said three and a half million dollars. 'Three and a half million dollars!' I said, 'Get serious! You talked for hours and you came up with *that*?' " Malone said he didn't have the nerve to mention the figure to the Gilbert/Robinson lawyers—the settlement they proposed, as it turned out, involved allowing Houlihan and Heyer to keep the Mike Houlihan's name for the two operations they already had, under a licensing agreement with Gilbert/Robinson, and paying them two hundred thousand dollars for legal fees and other losses—but Heyer and Houlihan didn't seem to mind that. What John Houlihan really wanted from his two-year struggle with Gilbert/Robinson, he told Malone, could be given only by the verdict of the jury: "I want to hear someone say that I was right and they were wrong."

That's what happened. The jury didn't use those words, but it found for Mike Heyer and John Houlihan. As the testimony ended, Malone had been confident, and he had become more confident after a bizarre maneuver by Gilbert/Robinson on the matter of its net worth. Because Malone was asking for punitive damages, Gilbert/Robinson was required to provide a statement of net worth—the law presumes that a jury can't know whether a judgment would be punitive unless it knows what the punished party considers real money—and the figure provided was a hundred and six million dollars. Then, at the last moment, lawyers brought in a revised figure of nine hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars—a figure arrived at by subtracting from the company's net worth the indebtedness its management had acquired by buying it from Grace with other people's money. Malone jumped all over that. After eliciting testimony that the three Houlihan's restaurants in the St. Louis area alone grossed ten million dollars a year, he said that telling a jury that Gilbert/Robinson was worth less than a million dollars was typical of the sort of arrogant mendacity some corporations practiced when it suited them. In his summation, he said that Gilbert/Robinson had lied in attesting that Tom Houlihan was a fictitious person, and that it had lied when it placed a circled "R," for registration, next to the Houlihan's logo, and that it had lied when it threatened his clients and other people with a Houlihan's registration that was nonexistent. The other people who were threatened had backed down, Malone said, but "every now and then, somebody says, 'No, I'm not going to put up with this. I am going to fight you. I don't care what it costs. I don't care if you're worth a hundred and six million bucks. I'm going to fight you.' " John Houlihan was such a man, Malone said, and the jury had the opportunity not simply to award him and his partner what they had lost in their fight but to "send a message from that jury room and from this courtroom, not just to Gilbert/Robinson but to corporations, businesses throughout this country that says, 'When the law says you do something, you do it. *You don't lie!*' "

Houlihan and Heyer still talk about that summation. "Here's this one guy against the biggest trademark firm in the country," Houlihan will say. "And he didn't just beat them, he beat the hell out of them. He murdered them." They talk about the tears they saw in one juror's eyes as Malone finished. They talk about the column that Bill McClellan, of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, wrote on how the pure Irish beauty of Malone's words should cause the balladeers to sing his praises: "It was as if the fairies themselves inspired our lad after that! His words rang through the courtroom." And, eventually, they talk about the judgment. Counting punitive damages, the jury said, Gilbert/Robinson should pay John Houlihan and Mike Heyer and their various enterprises a total of three million one hundred thousand dollars.

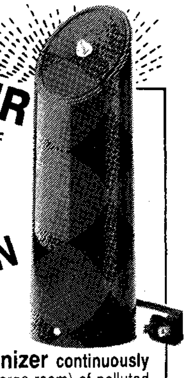
Bill McClellan's column, transformed into a bronze plaque, is now on the wall of Jim Malone's office, not far from his framed photograph of four jubilant Milwaukee Brewers at the moment the Brewers clinched a share of the 1981 American League pennant. The plaque was presented to him by John Houlihan and Mike Heyer as a sort of victory symbol. They believe that they have won even if they never see any of the three million dollars—which, of course, is a distinct possibility. The trial judge could reduce, or even set aside, the judgment. An appeals court could reverse the verdict. Gilbert/Robinson has more than just the three million dollars riding on the outcome: Malone has asked Judge Limbaugh to cancel the federal registration that the jury found fraudulent. Fred Hipp, the president of Gilbert/Robinson's casual-dining division, seems resigned to Gilbert/Robinson's being cast in the role of the bully in the case, but he insists that his company has done nothing wrong. He says he's confident that an appeals court—made up of judges looking at the law, rather than jurors listening to Malone's theme—will agree with him. "The strategy of Jim Malone was to show that big corporate America had screwed John Houlihan," Hipp said recently. "What won the case was the emotional appeal—big guy versus little guy—to a jury that knows nothing about it."

John Houlihan and Mike Heyer have more or less gone back to their lives. The Green Tree Market closed a few months ago—a victim, Heyer says, not only of construction problems but of pressure from warehouse supermarkets. Green Tree Liquor is still open, but there's a manager to run it. Houlihan and Heyer are looking at sites for a new bar. Not long after the trial, they were asked if they planned to call their next bar Mike Houlihan's.

"Actually, we're thinking of naming the next one Jimmy Malone's," Houlihan said.

"Of course," Heyer said, "we'd get his consent in writing first."

—Calvin Trillin



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Back to the Drawing Board

ROBERT ZEMECKIS'S "Who Framed Roger Rabbit," a manic comedy in which animated cartoon characters interact with live actors, is an amazing feat of entertainment engineering. It's like a Disneyland ride, or one of those special-process World's Fair movies designed to give us the illusion that we're falling through the sky without a parachute or riding a gigantic tidal wave or getting thrown six counties by a tornado. Sure we're impressed—also pretty relieved when the experience is over. Now we know how *that* feels, we tell ourselves (as we try to breathe normally again). So now, thanks to Zemeckis and a small army of animators and special-effects artists, we know what it feels like to live in a world where drawings of bunnies, babies, and talking taxicabs have as much reality as human beings. This is "movie magic" at its most elaborate and most daunting: like a Vegas magician's colossal finale (making an elephant disappear from the stage, or something), it inspires awe rather than simple delight.

In "Roger Rabbit," which is set in Los Angeles in 1947, Zemeckis and his team mean to pay homage to the Hollywood animation of the thirties and forties. Just about every popular cartoon character of that era, from Betty Boop to Dumbo, does a walk-on (or fly-on), and the movie's frenetic, gag-a-minute pace is clearly inspired by the great Warner Bros. comedy shorts that "starred" Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, and, later, the Road Runner and Wile E. Coyote. But "Roger Rabbit" doesn't have the right spirit. The best animators—the *funniest* ones, like Tex Avery and Chuck Jones—weren't big-deal magicians at all. Their effects were more like the tricks that close-up magicians do with cards and coins: small marvels of lightness and dexterity timed to follow each other so quickly and so smoothly that they seem effortless. Zemeckis does his best to keep things moving in "Roger Rabbit"—to give us the illusion of crazy, daredevil invention—but he can't quite disguise what a massive, backbreaking strain it is to try to make all these complex interactive effects both convincing and wildly funny. Studio animators like Jones and Avery worked with a handful of gagmen and artists, and cranked out six- or seven-minute comedies at the rate of one every five weeks. Poor Zemeckis needed to marshal the forces of dozens of animators (supervised by Richard Williams), a huge live-action crew, and a few more dozens of special-effects technicians, and to produce out of all this mobilized wizardry a relentlessly zany feature-length movie. (The film runs a hundred and three minutes.) This is about as likely to succeed as Wile E. Coyote's tortuously ingenious attempts to trap the Road Runner: he rigs up ever more elaborate devices for, say, launching a boulder to squash his speedy prey, but the big rock always lands on the coyote, and the Road Runner beep-beeps on by.

Zemeckis directs as if he suspected that he's going to get squashed. The movie begins with an animated short featuring a pair of original characters: Baby Herman, a placidly destructive infant, and the floppy, oversized, neurotic Roger Rabbit, a comic victim, who is stretched out of shape, bounced off walls, and pulverized by kitchen appliances as he zips around trying to contain the havoc the baby creates. As in many cartoons, the character who expends the most energy—the coyote, Elmer chasing Bugs, Sylvester chasing Tweety, Tom chasing Jerry, Daffy Duck doing anything—is the butt of all the jokes. In cartoons, the tiny, quiet, clever creatures always frustrate the strenuous efforts of the bigger ones, and the Baby Herman short is true to the classic form. It's also not very good. The cartoon is the movie in miniature: it's technically scrupulous and respectful of its sources, but it has a frantic, anxious, self-destructive quality that throws the timing off. In its desperation to please, this cartoon is as screwed up and out of control as its nervous second banana Roger, who, after a climactic gag in which he's flattened by a refrigerator, walks off the "set" jabbering to the (human) director that he'll try harder, do better, do *anything* that's asked of him. (We'd like to ask him to shut up.) The whole movie's like that: it keeps shoving itself in our faces, promising and pleading and contorting itself into different shapes, trying to dazzle us so that we don't see what it really is—one of the big, greedy, ungainly animals whose efforts always come to grief.

"Who Framed Roger Rabbit" is a folly; what's more, it's a trivial one. The script, by Jeffrey Price and Peter Seaman (based very loosely on a novel by Gary K. Wolf), is a painstaking elaboration of a fairly witty conceit: that cartoon characters, called Toons here, are ordinary contract players in the already skewed universe of the old studio system. This wouldn't be a bad idea for a short subject. In 1940, it *was* a short subject: Friz Freleng's "You Ought to Be in Pictures," in which Daffy Duck and Porky Pig negotiate with the real, live head of Warners' animation department, Leon Schlesinger. Price and Seaman have pumped up the notion by placing the Toons in a conventional forties mystery plot, featuring a seedy, hard-drinking private eye played by Bob Hoskins (when the novelty of seeing Bugs Bunny and the hippos from "Fantasia" strolling around the back lot begins to flag, the filmmakers can fall back on genre parody), and by giving the Toons' situation a hint of social significance. The Toons are presented here as an exploited minority who live in a kind of ghetto (called Toontown), and provide the entertainment at a place known as the Ink and Paint Club, where only human beings are served. The plot links the discrimination against the lovable Toons with various dastardly schemes to corrupt the innocence and (supposedly) idyllic charm of L.A. in the forties. Formally, all the elements come together, but the net effect is a little oppressive: Do the moviemakers *have* to turn their slight, clever notion into a metaphor for racial integration just to get us to buy it?

Maybe they do. After all, Zemeckis and company aren't exactly tapping into a common fantasy, fulfilling the audience's secret dreams. It's likely that very few moviegoers even in those innocent forties ever imagined themselves having a drink with Bugs and Daffy, or yearned to see their favorite actors and their favorite cartoon characters become great pals. (The rare previous attempts to combine animation and live action—Gene Kelly dancing with the cute mouse Jerry in "Anchors Aweigh," for instance—are obviously just stunts, and not very satisfying.) Part of this movie's problem is that it has to work awfully hard to convince us that its miscegenation of forms is something we *should* desire.

All there is to "Who Framed Roger Rabbit," really, is an illusion of lunacy, a nostalgia for zaniness: technology and elaborate plot mechanics laboring mightily to evoke an aura of freedom and uninhibited joy. It asks us, in its sentimental all-star ending, to believe in the values of a happier, more spontaneous age, yet there's hardly a spontaneous moment in the movie. There are bits that work wonderfully: Roger's sireny wife, Jessica, a Toon with a curvy human form (and with the speaking voice of Kathleen Turner and the singing voice of Amy Irving), is a funny character; Hoskins is heroically unself-conscious under the circumstances, and gives a subtly stylized, amusing performance; Christopher Lloyd provides a spark of maniacal delight in his portrayal of the villainous Judge Doom. And the effects are ambitious and are impeccably executed. But Zemeckis doesn't seem like a happy filmmaker here: his work isn't nearly as fresh and inventive as it was in "Used Cars" and "Back to the Future" (both of which he wrote, with Bob Gale). He's trapped in a huge machine whose ingenious parts might easily have been supplied by the Acme Corporation, the source of the coyote's fiendish but ineffectual contraptions. Actually, the parts are courtesy of Disney's Touchstone Pictures, Steven Spielberg's Amblin Entertainment, and George Lucas's special-effects division, Industrial Light & Magic. With these three giant magic factories breathing down a director's neck, he's not going to be a relaxed guy: this is hardly a situation in which the anarchic spirit of the best forties animation is likely to flourish. Chuck Jones once said, "These cartoons were never made for children. Nor were they made for adults. They were made for *me*." If Zemeckis had said anything like that while he was making "Who Framed Roger Rabbit," someone would probably have dropped a refrigerator on his head.

"A Handful of Dust," published in 1934, was Evelyn Waugh's fourth novel and one of his best. It traces the decline of the fortunes of Tony Last, a naïve English landowner, husband, and father who is casually betrayed by everything and everyone he's been foolish enough to believe in. His country life—running his estate, watching his son grow, going to church on Sunday morning—gives him deep pleasure; everything in his conventional English world seems to have arranged itself for his dull contentment. But his wife, Brenda, whom he adores, is bored silly. Craving a bit more excitement, she rents a flat in London, for the purpose, she tells Tony (who's paying), of taking a course in economics. What she's actually doing in the city is conducting an affair with a vapid young social climber named John Beaver. Everyone knows but Tony, whose view of the world doesn't include the possibility of a wife's infidelity. Brenda's adventure has the effect of revealing the true nature of the society that Tony has found so benevolent. Everything works for Brenda now: none of her friends or her husband's would dream of giving her away, or depriving themselves of her charming presence at their London parties and dinners by expressing their disapproval of young Beaver. It's all rather exciting for everyone in their circle, even if it is, as Brenda's sister timidly suggests, "hard cheese on Tony." When the affair is finally acknowledged and Tony is deserted, the society has no trouble siding with his wife: his misery is a little messy, and his refusal to agree to a divorce settlement that would strip him of his beloved estate is seen as awfully bad form. (Even before the disasters, the accepted wisdom about Brenda and Tony is "She's lovely, he's rather a stick." Her charm gives her a big advantage.) When the disconsolate Tony tries to take himself away from this now treacherous world, to the jungles of Brazil, he has the rotten luck to fall in with the nearest thing to an Englishman for miles around—an English-speaking Barbadian called Mr. Todd, who loves Dickens and has genteelly unscrupulous ways of preserving his bit of civilization in the wilderness. It's *very* hard cheese on Tony.

This savage book has often been considered Waugh's first "serious" novel. There's more bitterness, more pain in it than in its predecessors—"Decline and Fall," "Vile Bodies," and "Black Mischief"—but it's not really so different: people say and do beastly things to each other, someone dies, and English society, superficial and infinitely adaptable, rolls on. Unfortunately, the filmmakers who have brought "A Handful of Dust" to the screen treat it as if it were one of the writer's ponderous later novels—as if it were "Brideshead Revisited." This isn't surprising, since the producer, Derek Granger,

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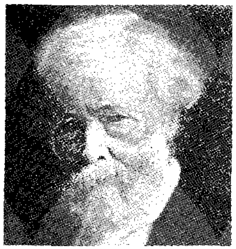

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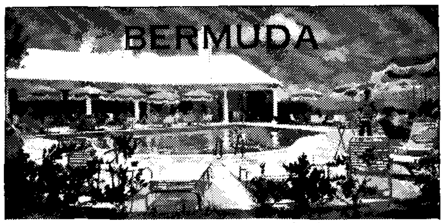

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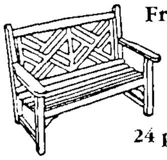

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and the director, Charles Sturridge, were also responsible for the pretty, plodding TV miniseries of "Brideshead" several years ago. The cinematography is creamy and pictorial, the sets and costumes are "Masterpiece Theatre"-opulent, the mood is helplessly nostalgic, and many of the actors seem to believe that they're playing fully rounded human beings rather than sharp, merciless caricatures. (*This* is a story peopled by cartoon characters.) Although virtually all the dialogue is lifted directly from the novel, the polished cruelty rarely sounds witty: the conventionally beautiful settings and the sincere acting make it play like a soap-opera script. James Wilby, who had the title role in Merchant Ivory's "Maurice," is Tony, and he certainly convinces us that he's a stick. His Tony seems merely pathetic; there isn't a trace of irony in the performance. Rupert Graves is colorless as Beaver, and Judi Dench, as his appalling mother, doesn't have enough scenes to make much of an impression. Kristin Scott Thomas almost succeeds as Brenda. She's light and appealing, and does very well in a difficult scene in which she is informed of a death, blurts out something shocking, and then realizes exactly what she's said. But her performance, too, needs a crueller edge.

The filmmakers give the impression that they identify with Tony and his solid old values. In fact, they're more like Brenda: they look as if they were being perfectly faithful to the novel, but they're constantly betraying it. For true fidelity we have to wait until the last twenty minutes or so, when Alec Guinness comes on as the alarming Mr. Todd. This small role is ideal for him. It's all a matter of inflection, of hitting the tiny notes of menace and ruthless self-interest in the lulling tones of polite English discourse. He's a peerless closeup artist: his eyelids drop by a millimetre, and the meaning changes. His sly, precise effects are an actor's equivalent of Waugh's sneakily devastating prose. Playing a man who loves Dickens, Guinness proves that he's a man who loves, and understands, Evelyn Waugh.

—TERRENCE RAFFERTY

EDITORS' NOTE: Mr. Rafferty is filling in for Pauline Kael, who is on vacation.

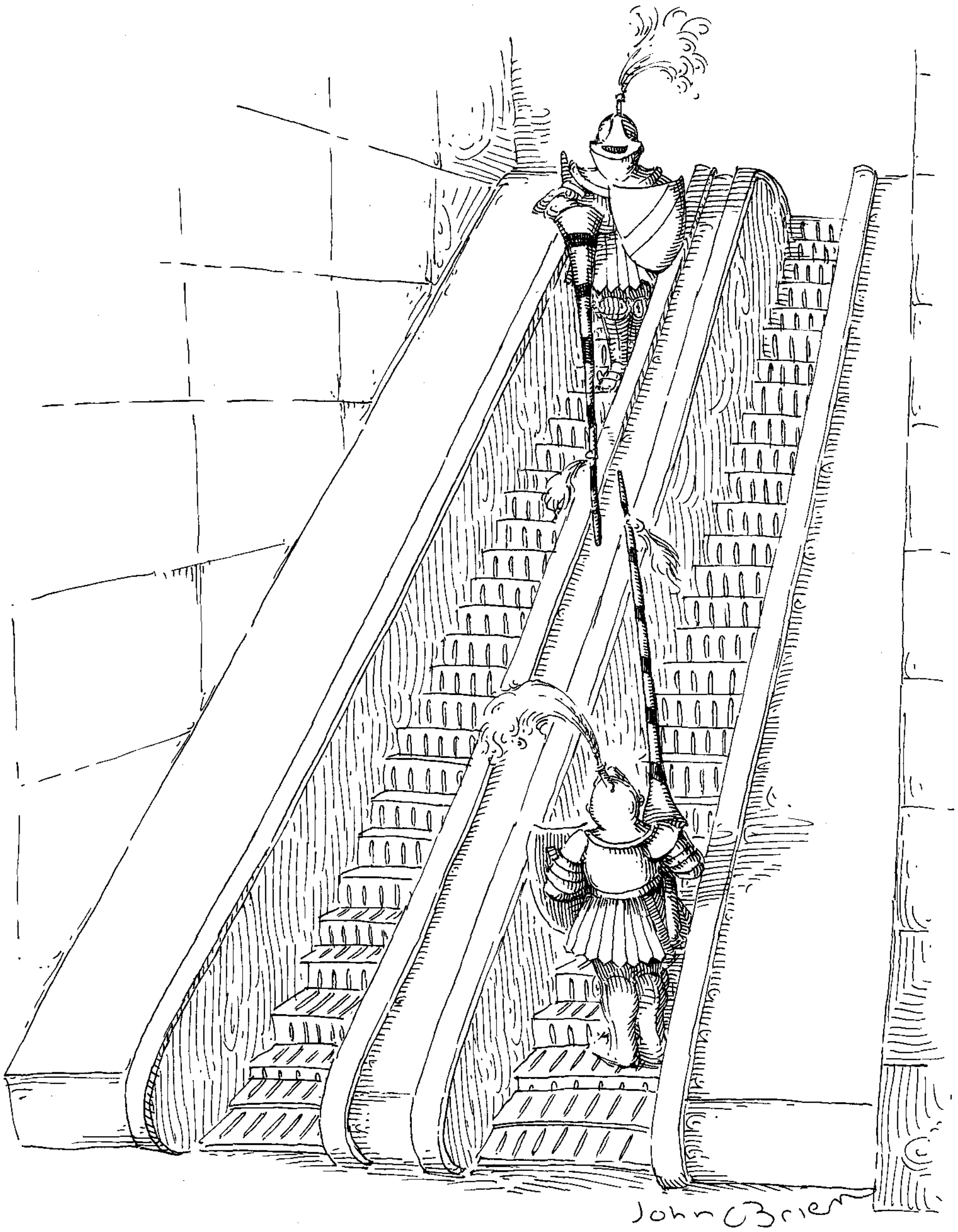
THE THEATRE

Son et Lumière

MARTHA CLARKE's "Miracolo d'Amore," at the Public, may not be the exhilarating miracle that her "Garden of Earthly Delights" was four years ago—what could be?—but there is pleasure in it all the same. It was inspired by the Punchinello drawings of the eighteenth-century Venetian painter Tiepolo and the floral sketches of the nineteenth-century French illustrator Grandville; the direction and the dancing are by Miss Clarke and her gifted company; the exquisite music was written by Richard Peaslee; the beautiful setting and costumes were designed by Robert Israel; and the lighting was by Paul Gallo. Seldom have our eyes and ears been more pampered. According to a press release, "the piece is about relationships attempted and failed." Well, I guess so. I saw it in more abstract terms—an evocation of romance and love and violence and sex and cruelty and death within the formal boundaries of eighteenth-century Venice. At the beginning, a stooped figure—a tall man in a woman's skirt—walks across the stage, broom in hand, followed by four naked young women, serene and lovely. The mood changes quickly, as the stage fills with the Punchinellos, and the action commences. Three women seated at a window hold and caress a skeleton, which appears in a variety of scenes throughout the evening. The Punchinellos quarrel and clown around and roughhouse and embrace and fight for possession of the women, a few of them nude to the waist and in bouffant skirts. The lyrics of the solos and choral songs are in a kind of Italian patois, as are the few spoken words. The funny final word is the real thing, though. All this, I realize, is more inventory than description; the elements combine and recombine, taking us by surprise as often as not. There is, I might add, no skimping on earthly delights, either.

THEODORE MANN has directed, at his Circle in the Square, a generally weak revival of Tennessee Williams' "The Night of the Iguana," a play that needs all the help it can get. The action, to start with a compliment, takes place all over the stage area, in Zack Brown's effective setting, which becomes the sandy surroundings of that rickety hotel on the Mexican coast. The characters—outlandish types, all of them—demand exceptional acting to make them plausible, much less acceptable, and, a couple of instances aside, exceptional is the last word that comes to mind. Those instances are notable, though. Jane Alexander plays the slatternly proprietress of the hotel with a relish in the role—an odd one for her—that becomes infectious. But it is Maria Tucci, as an aging spinster, who gives the production whatever strength and focus it attains. The spinster, Hannah Jelkes, is somewhere near forty, and she travels around with her ninety-seven-year-old grandfather, a poet, and earns her living by selling sketches of the people she runs into. Miss Tucci acts her with a kind of wary innocence, and no aspect of the character—who is part artist, part con artist, and part saint (Mr. Williams' saint, that is)—escapes her. The roles Mr. Williams wrote, whatever their provenance, must be irresistible to performers; but as for the other members of the company, some of them with the highest credentials, nothing they do registers much.

—EDITH OLIVER



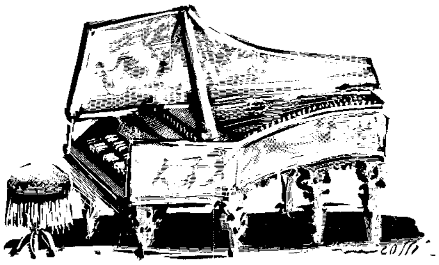
MUSICAL EVENTS

Reinterpretations

THE Opera Theatre of St. Louis held this year to its usual and successful formula: a Mozart opera, a rare opera, a modern opera, and a pop, played in a four-week May-and-June season so arranged that all four works can be heard during a three-day visit. This year's works were "La Finta Giardiniera," Weber's "Oberon," Samuel Barber's "Vanessa," and "La Bohème." The first two—Mozart's tenth musical drama and Weber's last—have beautiful scores attached to librettos that have been found awkward. In St. Louis, they were given in performing editions by Colin Graham, the artistic director of the company. The Mozart was based on a translation that Edmund Tracey made twelve years ago for Mr. Graham's English Music Theatre Company; it derives from the German version of the opera, with spoken dialogue, which Mozart himself prepared. (The Juilliard staged the Tracey version nine years ago; the casts included Hei-Kyung Hong, who was a Met Despina last season, and Susanne Mentzer, who was the Jane Seymour of Covent Garden's recent "Anna Bolena.")

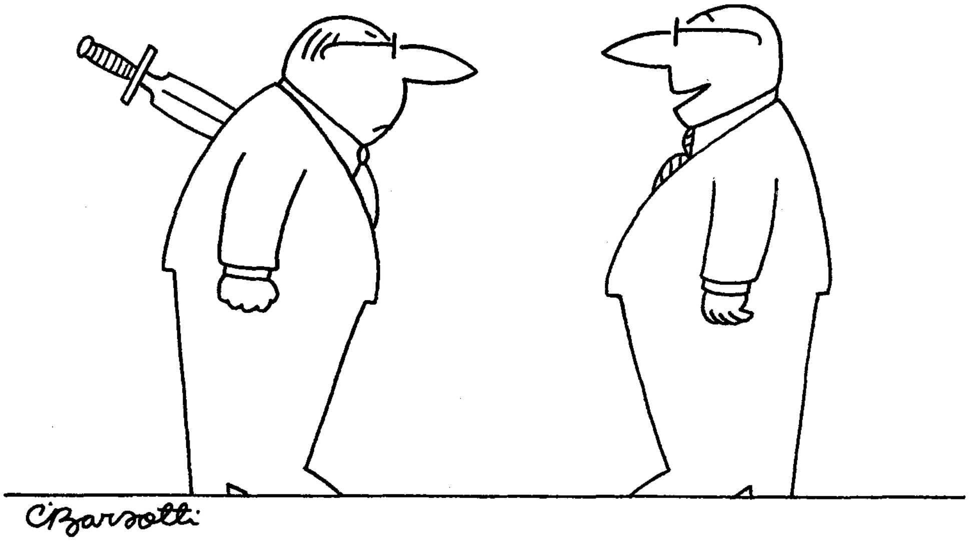
The text of the "Giardiniera" is now generally (but not yet in St. Louis) attributed to Giuseppe Petrosellini, the librettist of Paisiello's "Barbiere." It was composed by Pasquale Anfossi, appeared in Rome in 1774, and was soon taken up elsewhere. Dresden, London, Vienna, and Warsaw produced Anfossi's opera in 1775. In January of that year, Mozart's new setting of the text appeared in Munich. The "Giardiniera" is an unconventional *dramma giocoso*, shot through with violence. Before curtain rise, Count Belfiore has stabbed the Marchioness Violante and left her for dead. Recovered, disguised as a gardener girl, and calling herself Sandrina, she seeks him, only to find him betrothed to Arminda, a Milanese gentlewoman. He is bewildered, unsure whether Sandrina is really Violante. Arminda, scenting a rival, has Sandrina abducted and carried off into the forest to be devoured by wild beasts. The stress of emotions drives both Sandrina and Belfiore mad; they seek refuge in pastoral and mythological delusions. These high passions are set within a conventional opera-buffa framework, with an elderly buffo, the Podestà, wooing Sandrina; his soubrette servant Serpetta out to capture him; Sandrina's servant Nardo wooing Serpetta; and one Ramiro in love with Arminda. All is brought to a happy end: Violante/Sandrina and Belfiore sane and reunited; Arminda joined to Ramiro, and Serpetta to Nardo; and the Podestà looking forward with equanimity to finding, one day, another Sandrina.

Anfossi's opera—what I know of it—is tuneful and pleasant. The eighteen-year-old Mozart responded more richly to the strangeness of the stuff. In number after number, with his vocal gestures, his rhythms, his harmonies, his instrumental colors he seems to search into mysteries of human emotions and human behavior. (Why does Violante still love Belfiore? What does Belfiore now feel about the woman from whom, by attempted murder, he sought to free himself? What keeps Ramiro constant to the disagreeable Arminda, who scorns him?) These concerns mingle with the conventional frolics of a comic-opera emotional carrousel. Erotic tragedy and standard foolery—as in Don Giovanni's burlesque serenade to a heartbroken Donna Elvira—already coexist. None of the characters are straightforward. On the simple level, Mozart writes an excellent comic opera. His numbers are melodiously attractive, and each is differently scored. Some are short and songlike; others are developed, "symphonic." The first-act and second-act finales are long, long spans of linked movements charged with many emotions. A 1775 critic wrote, presciently, "Flashes of genius appear here and there. . . . If Mozart is not a plant forced in the hothouse, he is bound to grow into one of the greatest musical composers who ever lived." Some modern productions of the "Giardiniera"—the opera is now quite often performed—have sought to do justice to the deeper levels. The St. Louis version removed the violence, soothed the strangeness, softened the smart. When Violante told how Belfiore had stabbed her to the heart, she added a gratuitous "I speak metaphorically." Arminda's murder attempt was omitted. Her final coupling with Ramiro was prompted by his invented accession to a barony. It is a point of view: an attempt to "save" the piece by turning it into a conventional, easily acceptable, rationally motivated eighteenth-century comedy. Mozart's music suggests something wilder, more desperate.



On the cozy, amusing level of traditional comic-opera behavior, Nicholas Muni's production worked well enough—except when listening characters who should be keeping the focus on a singer and his or her plight drew attention to themselves by stock business with apples, wineglasses, etc. The actors' imaginations seemed unfired. They were not adepts at putting the words across; they tended to sound and behave like "singers." Roger Nierenberg—who also led the Juilliard "Giardiniera"—conducted as if he had lovingly studied the notes and the way they moved, but not the text. He drove through some statements that needed more time to tell. The instrumentalists, drawn from the St. Louis Symphony, did not play as if, to a woman and a man, they were listening to what Mozart's characters were saying, and furthering it with all their hearts. (In fairness, I add that the depth of the St. Louis pit pretty well precludes such listening.) The string articulation was not lively. Four arias were omitted (among them Ramiro's poignant, bassoon-colored "Dolce d'amor compagna"), and most of the others were abridged. This was a "Finta Giardiniera" tailored and adjusted, dramatically and musically, to match, not to challenge, an audience's eighteenth-century expectations. On its own terms, it was a fluent and enjoyable show. I hope Peter Sellars tackles the work before long.

WEBER composed "Oberon" for Covent Garden, in 1826, to a deplorable libretto by James Robinson



"Friends, Arthur? I would have said we were acquaintances."

Planché. In Tovey's emphatic phrase, "he poured his last and finest music into this pig-trough, and shared the applause with the magnificent scenery." That throws too much blame on Planché. The truth is that Weber, despite his importance to operatic history and his influence on Wagner, Mendelssohn, Mahler, and many others, was a theatrically gauche composer. He invented wonderfully vivid numbers but could not sustain dramatic impetus. "Der Freischütz," which is deemed his masterpiece and was internationally successful in its day, does not hold the modern stage; company after company essays a revival and then swiftly drops the production. "Euryanthe," for all its fine music, remains a curiosity. I have heard "Oberon" a dozen times or so, and each time in a different edition—a new attempt to salvage the music. None of these attempts last. Yet they are worth making, for Weber's music *is* beautiful and flowers most fully in an apt theatrical context. Mr. Graham's "Oberon" for St. Louis is one of the more successful versions, not least because the editor has done his tinkering lightly. Weber's pupil Julius Benedict, for Her Majesty's in 1860, composed recitatives and inserted numbers from "Euryanthe." (Planché worked with him on this grand-opera adaptation, which was sung in Italian.) Mahler composed linking melodramas on Weber material. Artur Bodansky, for the Met in 1918 (with Rosa Ponselle and Giovanni Martinelli), composed recitatives and devised singing roles for some of the speakers. Anthony Burgess, for Scottish Opera in 1985, wrote a new plot and new lyrics, about a mission to rescue two American secretaries held hostage in a Muslim state—to which Graham Vick, directing, added the further conceit of a Moorish-picture-palace setting and cinematic action. (Fatima's "O Araby! dear Araby! My own, my native land" becomes Selina's "New Mexico, New Mexico, The state where I was born.") Mr. Graham has abridged Planché severely and tidied him but has kept the basic plot largely intact. Only three musical numbers are displaced. A merry baritone song with yodel refrain, "Mein Weib ist capores," which Weber composed in 1815 for insertion in the Fischer-Gieseke "Der Travestirte Aeneas," is added, for Sherasmin. (Mahler used it in his completion of Weber's "Die Drei Pintos.") Planché's three acts are disposed as two, with the intermission where Benedict placed it in 1860, after the quartet "Over the dark blue waters." Most important, Mr. Graham has retained the tone and temper of the original, so that the music makes the kinds of effects that Weber planned and does not seem incongruous. The composer had no illusions about the shortcomings of the libretto, but he seized every chance for portraying real feelings, either in direct human plights or in enchanted episodes where elfin assemblies or a mermaid's song beneath a starry sky become metaphors for romantic emotion.

The St. Louis production, designed in bright colors by Emanuele Luzzati, was pretty and picturesque. The staging had its proper starting point, in British pantomime; the transformation scenes were amusing and surprising. Whenever the music began, the three linked worlds—chivalric, exotic, and supernatural—that Weber conjured up in small space, with delicate instrumental precision, found appropriate representation. Seriousness and mirth were nicely balanced. The stars of the show were Cary John Franklin's choristers, especially in the bewitching maritime assembly of the (original) second-act finale: their phrasing was Mendelssohnian, their tuning was exact, and their words were clear. Weber's soprano and tenor writing is not comfortable; his operas prove hard to cast. Nova Thomas, the Reiza, was a young soprano willing to sacrifice freshness for volume and "richness." Melanie Sonnenberg, the mezzo Fatima, was lustrous. Michael Myers dealt bravely with Sir Huon's music; the voice is not seductive, but his declamation is passionate and manly. (The bravura set piece "O 'tis a glorious sight to see," which Weber added at the request of his first Huon, John Braham, was not used.) Allan Glassman, the Oberon, gave a forceful account of "Fatal vow" but was charmless of timbre. James Michael McGuire, a first-rate Sherasmin, was the artist most fully in command of his native tongue, able to sing it communicatively, directly. Strange distortions made the speech of the Puck, Cheryl Majercik, and the Titania, Caroline McGee, almost unintelligible. John Nelson's conducting was alert. Sometimes he tended to underline the marvels he found in the score, to protract them with an overloving hand. The deep pit rather than the players should probably be held responsible for some lack of keenness in the orchestral timbres.

BARBER'S "Vanessa" is not exactly a "modern" opera. It appeared at the Met thirty years ago, and even then it seemed a confection of Mussorgsky, Tchaikovsky, and Richard Strauss. Gian Carlo Menotti, the librettist of the opera, calls it, in his program note,

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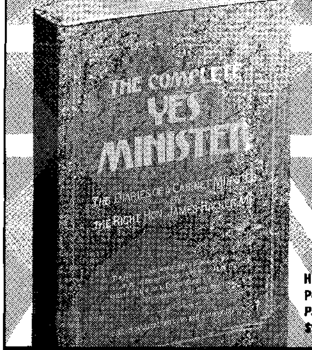

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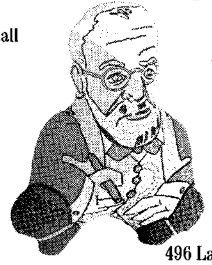

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"the story of two women . . . caught in the central dilemma which faces every human being: whether to fight for one's ideals to the point of shutting oneself off from reality, or compromise with what life has to offer." Mr. Vick, who directed the St. Louis production, said in his program note, "By its very creation 'Vanessa' exposes a great human weakness: the desire to retreat into an invented past. . . . In its heightened lyricism and melodramatic outbursts the music invests these inflated characters with a desperate urge to feel—but this urge, devoid of honesty, leaves them frozen in their own emotional immobility." The contents of the piece "all too clearly illustrate that sense of personal martyrdom which, devoid of the very real struggle that human relationships present, encourages the opera's characters and its audiences toward the kind of emotional narcissism represented, for instance, by the operas of Richard Strauss." So the piece can be used "to expose the unwillingness of a post-war society to face up to its spiritual sterility."

Menotti's libretto is romantic rubbish—Isak Dinesen rewritten for housemaids. Barber's music moves along dutifully, breaking into a number or two that people half remember—Erika's aria in Act I, the quintet in Act IV. (If that "half" seems unduly severe, ask a "Vanessa" champion to sing back more than the opening phrases of those numbers.) One may question the propriety of marshalling the full resources of an opera company to demonstrate the shortcomings of a work, of the genre it represents, and of artists and audiences who can take such a piece seriously. But it was an interesting, intelligent demonstration, one that engaged the eye and the mind more sharply than did the "accurate," self-indulgent original presentation of "Vanessa"—directed by Menotti, designed by Cecil Beaton—which came to Salzburg after the Met première.

Mr. Vick raised other questions relevant to operatic presentation today: the effect of shifting a representational drama into a nonrealistic setting; the effect of changing the period of a period opera. He had moved the action forward from "about 1905" to the time of the opera's composition. Anatol, played by John David De Haan as a blond, bulky lout, wore, instead of Nicolai Gedda's immaculate evening dress, black leather and jeans—elaborately studded for the ball scene. Vanessa, Patricia Wells, wore dresses of elegant, extravagant design; in panelled intricacy at the ball, she resembled a transformer toy that could perhaps be refolded into a submarine or a spaceship. Her hair changed color from scene to scene. Erika, Susan Graham, wore a schoolgirl's gym tunic; the Old Baroness, Elaine Bonazzi, a jersey and a sensible tweed skirt. The servants went to church in evening dress. Kevin Rupnik's set was an indoor-outdoor expanse strewn with withered grasses and flowers. It bore trees, such furniture as the action required, and also stuffed representations of the "hungry deer" that Erika hears "night after night . . . wander weeping in the woods." (A trickle of stage snow descended on them through Act I.) The Paris Opera front curtain formed the backdrop. Vertiginous red steps led up to the bedrooms. It was striking to look at—clean, challenging, and distinguished—and was very well lit, by Peter Kaczorowski. Mr. Vick, unsparing in his perceptions of what grand-opera audiences happily accept, pushed some episodes into wicked caricature. It was a thoughtful, earnest, witty, and very skillful production. If "Vanessa" were an opera I cared about, it would have made me angry.

Miss Graham sang Erika sincerely, candidly, with full clear tones but with occasionally distorted vowels. Miss Wells looked taut and beautiful. Her voice seemed strained; she cast no deluding vocal glamour over the role. Joseph Rescigno conducted a reduced orchestration. The strings sounded thin. In this lively attack on operatic flummery one could not always be sure whether deficiencies of execution were deliberate.

"LA BOHÈME" was very different. A delicate, balanced performance, with fresh young voices brought forward on the text (Richard Pearlman and Francis Rizzo's deft English translation), might have provided answers to some of Mr. Vick's arguments. But this was a noisy, everyday performance, clumsily staged in ugly scenery. Mimì and Rodolfo did not seem to be in love with each other. Colline turned the Coat Song into a Boris monologue. A few of Mimì's softer passages were gently and touchingly sung, by Kallen Esperian.

—ANDREW PORTER

BOOKS

Long, Hot Summer

"WE ARE NOT AFRAID: THE STORY OF GOODMAN, SCHWERNER, AND CHANEY AND THE CIVIL RIGHTS CAMPAIGN FOR MISSISSIPPI," by Seth Cagin and Philip Dray (Macmillan; $22.50), is the history of an American crime: the murder of three civil-rights workers—James Earl Chaney, a twenty-one-year-old black Mississippian, and two white New Yorkers, Andrew Goodman, twenty, and Michael Schwerner, twenty-four—in Neshoba County, Mississippi, on June 21, 1964. After the men disappeared that night, the local police refused to investigate. The next day, several Choctaw Indians came across the men's burned car, and on August 4th the F.B.I. uncovered their bodies, which had been buried by a bulldozer in an earth dam. Eighteen defendants, many of them members of the Ku Klux Klan, were tried in a federal district court in Meridian in October, 1967, for conspiring to deprive the dead men of their civil rights; among them were the Neshoba County sheriff and his deputy. Seven were found guilty. The authors emphasize that this was the first time that a jury in Mississippi had convicted any white person of a crime against either a black or a civil-rights worker.

On this traditional foundation—crime, detection, and punishment—Cagin and Dray have constructed a spacious narrative that recounts the evolution of the Southern civil-rights movement in the decade 1954-64. It includes biographies of the three victims and offers portraits of American institutions at the time; we learn, for instance, that the F.B.I. attacked the Klan in Mississippi exactly as it had the American Communist Party. Like any good crime story, the book is suspenseful; and, far too convincingly for comfort, it conveys the atmosphere of a Mississippi where the white community was all too ready to participate in a reign of terror.

The book opens with Chaney, Goodman, and Schwerner inspecting the ruins of a black church burned down by the Ku Klux Klan. They had driven over the lonely rural roads from Meridian, where Schwerner and his wife, Rita, ran a community center for the Congress of Racial Equality, to investigate the fire. The narrative follows them through the last day of their lives and then flashes back to April, when Goodman, a student at Queens College, attended a meeting at which Aaron Henry invited Northern college students to help register black voters in the Mississippi Summer Project of 1964. Henry, a forty-one-year-old pharmacist, the president of the Mississippi state conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, headed the Council of Federated Organizations, a coalition of Mississippi civil-rights groups. Next, the tale moves farther back—to February of 1960, when four black students at the North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College at Greensboro decided to sit in at the whites-only lunch counter of the town's Woolworth's. Cagin and Dray alternate the lives of the victims and the development of the civil-rights movement in a counterpart of cinematic crosscutting. The book resembles a good documentary film, and in explaining how the three men happened to be where they were when they were killed it clarifies both the public and the private aspects of the tragedy.

The authors date the modern civil-rights movement from the Supreme Court's school-desegregation decision of 1954, Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, which reanimated black hopes of attaining first-class citizenship, and, in the South, awakened white resistance to their demands. The ensuing decade was the decade of the Montgomery bus boycott, the sit-ins,

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Since 1958

and the freedom rides; it saw the creation of new civil-rights organizations, among them the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and the emergence of new civil-rights leaders, most notably the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.; and it was the decade in which the three murdered men grew up. In 1959, Chaney, in Meridian, was suspended by the (black) principal of his (black) high school for wearing a paper N.A.A.C.P. button to school: the Chaneys couldn't afford to join the N.A.A.C.P.; its dues were two dollars a year. Goodman's middle-class family sent him to a Manhattan progressive school, where, the authors believe, he was taught to take his convictions seriously. Schwerner, who grew up in Westchester, studied veterinary medicine and then switched to social work. He worked in a Lower East Side settlement house for a year and a half until, in January of 1964, he and his wife, a schoolteacher, moved to Meridian for CORE. The CORE center's activities—Ping-Pong and tutoring, sewing classes and lessons in citizenship—had been staples of settlement work since the nineteenth century, but Schwerner was marked for death because he offered them to blacks in Mississippi in 1964.

The civil-rights volunteers—black college students, for the most part—who populate the volume are not mere names but lively individuals, concerned about both the limits on their own futures in a segregated society and the oppression of their unlettered fellow-blacks in the rural South. These young people are impressive, but the authors do not make them into plaster saints, even though the civil-rights movement's commitment to nonviolence demanded almost saintlike behavior. Dr. King, we know, had espoused nonviolence as a creed. The authors tell us that the first protesters at Greensboro practiced nonviolence "freely," and that a code of nonviolence for student demonstrators was formulated at Nashville in February of 1960. The organizing meeting of S.N.C.C., that April, in Raleigh, North Carolina, adopted the Nashville code. The authors note that the following month white students engaged in a nonviolent demonstration to protest hearings that the House Committee on Un-American Activities was holding in San Francisco's City Hall.

In the authors' genealogy, the civil-rights movement—the Mississippi Summer Project in particular—begat the student rebellions of the nineteen-sixties. They note, just as an instance, that Mario Savio, who later founded the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley, had been a Mississippi Summer Project volunteer. They also point out that the civil-rights movement helped to incubate women's liberation: two women S.N.C.C. workers, Mary King and Casey Hayden, circulated a paper calling their male colleagues' attention to their domineering ways and sexist assumptions. And S.N.C.C. made its decisions not by majority vote but by consensus, which is considered radical in the Western world (though not, for instance, in Japan).

The Eisenhower Administration intervened reluctantly in civil-rights cases, and the federal government really began to pursue Southern violations of the Constitution only after 1960. President Kennedy started cautiously, because he needed Southern votes in Congress, and because he was afraid of repeating the mistakes of the Reconstruction era, when, he believed (mistakenly), the federal government had been too coercive. (Until lately, the accepted history of Reconstruction has been a politically pernicious myth, but two new good histories for the general reader—Richard Nelson Current's "Those Terrible Carpetbaggers" and Eric Foner's "Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877"—retrieve the period's reality.) The President's brother Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, whose department was charged with enforcing civil-rights laws, sought emollient solutions, and hoped that civil-rights organizations would concentrate on voting rights, because, as the authors quote him, "nobody could really oppose voting." They characterize this judgment as naïve, but naïveté is not always discreditable. There are evils that no normally decent person can be expected to imagine. For example, after civil-rights workers visited Leflore County, in the Mississippi Delta, seeking to persuade blacks to try to register to vote in 1962, the county board of supervisors stopped distributing federal surplus foods to the coun-

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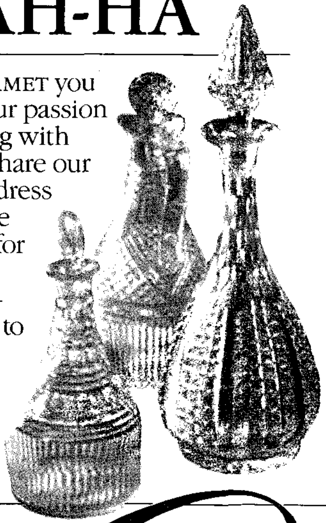

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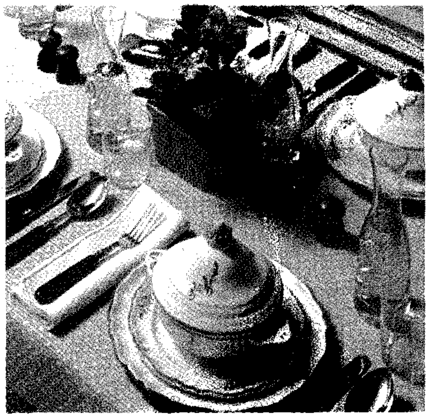

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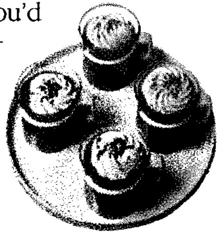

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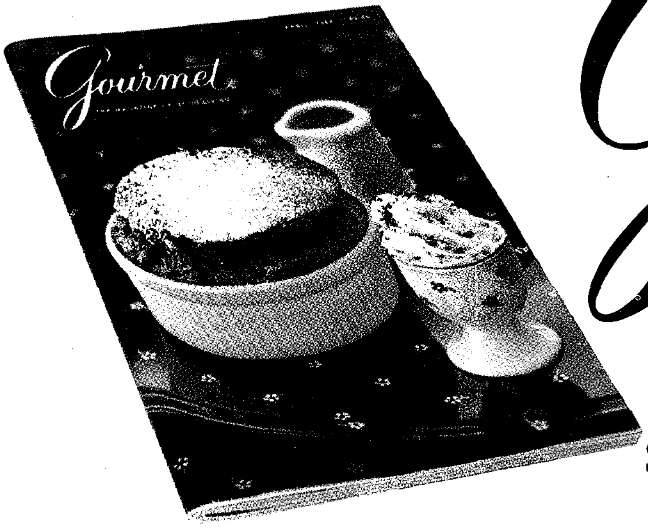

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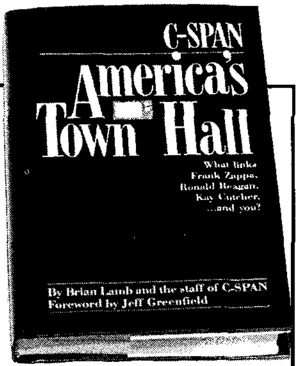
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By Brian Lamb and the staff of C-SPAN
Foreword by Jeff Greenfield

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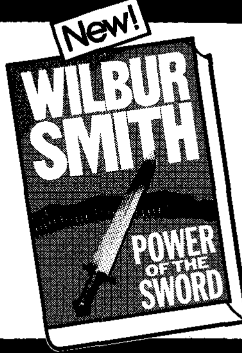

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ty's poor, most of whom were black farmworkers who needed help during the winter. In the state's newspapers the county's attempt at enforced starvation was reported as an experiment in welfare reform.

The campaign to register blacks in Mississippi had begun as early as 1960, when S.N.C.C. sent a single volunteer, Robert Moses, a Northern-born black, to the state. The book chronicles white Mississippi's response—four years of murders, beatings, jailings, and varieties of economic coercion that went unnoticed by most Americans. The authors say that some black civil-rights workers thought the Neshoba killings received national publicity only because two of the victims were white. Since the national media generally depend on local media to tell them what matters locally, and Mississippi press coverage of Mississippi race killings was negligible, it is more likely that these murders aroused nationwide attention because both whites came from New York, where their families' grief and outrage were reported.

Far from slowing the Summer Project, the murders brought increased national support, and the authors describe how the movement became involved in Presidential politics. In the summer of 1964, Robert Kennedy was still Attorney General, but Lyndon Johnson had succeeded to the Presidency and was facing an election in the fall. Mississippi's regular, whites-only Democratic Party planned to punish Johnson for his support of civil rights by backing his opponent, Barry Goldwater, and that defection encouraged the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party's plan to send an alternative delegation to the Democratic National Convention. The M.F.D.P., which represented Mississippians who were illegally disenfranchised, had developed from a project suggested the year before by a Northern crusader, Allard Lowenstein. The authors are candid about the ambivalence that Lowenstein evoked in S.N.C.C., but his ideas—it was Lowenstein who also thought of flooding Mississippi with college students—were effective. When the Democratic National Convention opened, in August—two weeks after the funerals of Chaney, Goodman, and Schwerner—President Johnson had already decided not to seat the M.F.D.P.'s delegates, but he did not say so outright. Johnson's manipulations now seem like self-defeating cleverness, but at the time liberal Democrats thought that the "compromise" solution he imposed was a civil-rights triumph. Not so S.N.C.C., which fell into discord. Two years later it expelled its white members and began to advocate Black Power. It was left to other civil-rights groups to lead the demonstrations that brought about the Voting-Rights Act of 1965.

Cagin and Dray ask whether things would have turned out differently for S.N.C.C. had the M.F.D.P. been seated in 1964 instead of being put off until 1968. One wonders. Some of the M.F.D.P. delegates accepted the compromise, among them Aaron Henry. (He later won election to the Mississippi legislature.) The split seems to have been primarily, though not entirely, generational. The authors describe the students who founded S.N.C.C. four years earlier as having been wary of their elders—on guard against becoming an appendage of adult civil-rights groups. Apparently, the generation gap of the nineteen-sixties showed up earlier among blacks than among whites. It is also possible that the Black Power movement was only partly an expression of young blacks' disillusion with Democrats and whites; since the nineteen-sixties, the world has seen a resurgence of every kind of particularism, as if the end of ideology signalled the onset of tribalism everywhere.

Cagin and Dray do not wander that far. Their meticulousness re-creates a time that in retrospect appears a turning point in American history, and their love of detail imparts complexity—a kind of richness—to a story whose outlines are melodramatic. Their most memorable figures are the least well known: poor black Mississippians of both sexes and several generations who risked—and, in many instances, lost—their lives for the vote. The siege of Mississippi, as much as the siege of Yorktown, was an American victory; Cagin and Dray show its cost.

—Naomi Bliven

•

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[*From the Laramie* (*Wyo.*) *Daily Boomerang*]

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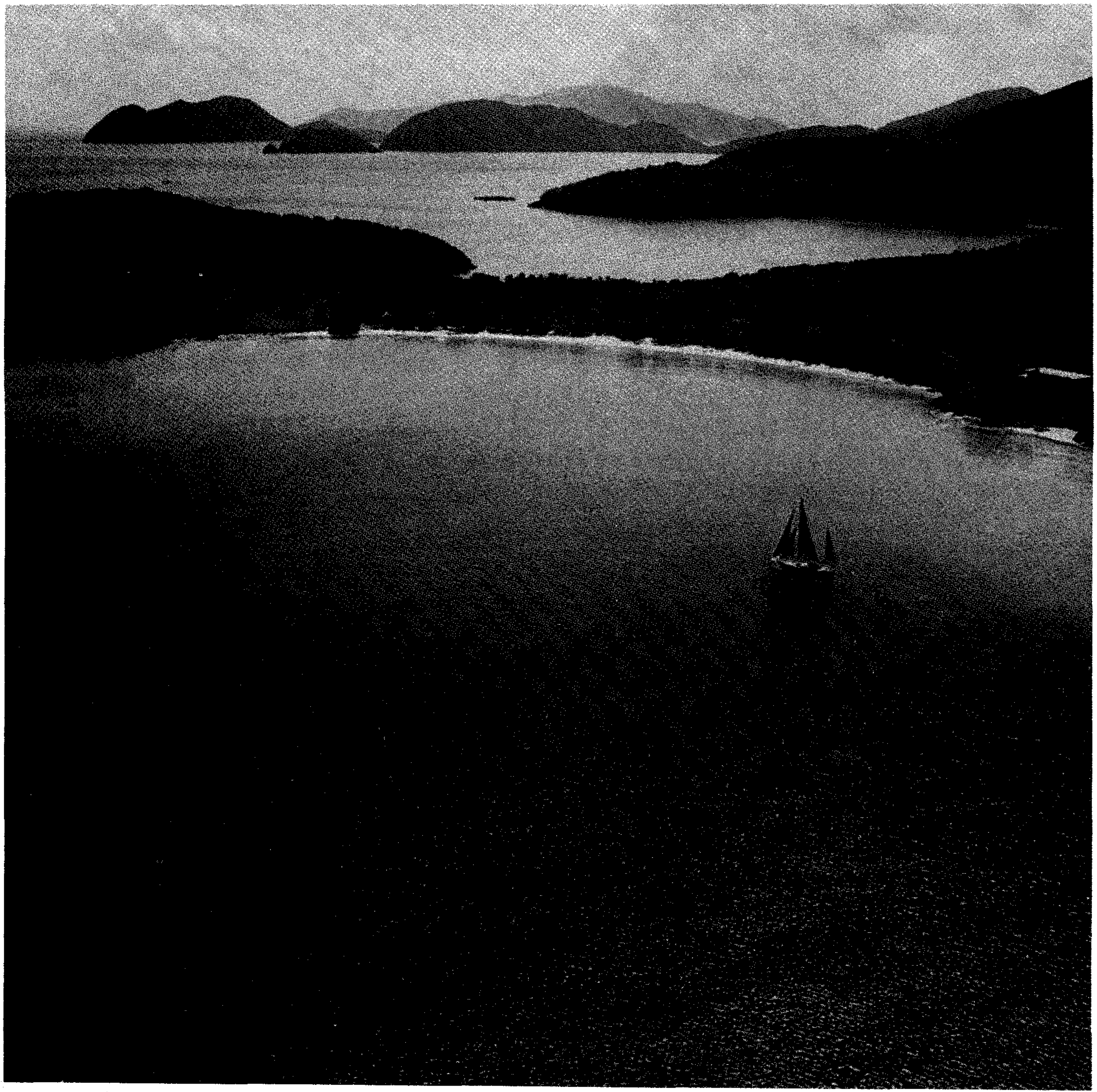

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AGE: 43.

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